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O'NEILL



IRELAND FOR THE IRISH:

A PRACTICAL, PEACEABLE, AND JUST SOLUTION
OF THE IRISH LAND QUESTION.

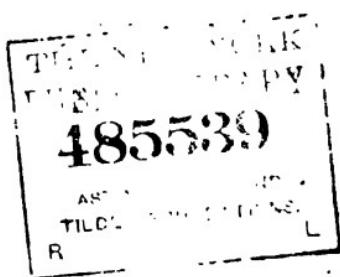
DEDICATED TO LORD VISCOUNT STANLEY.

BY
HENRY O'NEILL, ARTIST.

"Nothing ought to be exclusive property that can be enjoyed in common."
PALEY's Moral Phil., b. iii.

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1868.

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TO LORD VISCOUNT STANLEY.

"I *might* have told Ireland I pitied her lot,
Might have sooth'd her with hope—but you know I did not."
T. MOORE—*S. and H. Poems.*

My Lord,

I take the liberty of dedicating this work to you, because of your high character as a Statesman, and the elevated position you hold in the Cabinet. I wish to call your attention to the proposals I advocate for the good of Ireland.

You need scarcely be told that your speech, delivered at Bristol on the 22nd of January last, is one of great importance. In Ireland the Land Question is of paramount consequence; and the opinions of a distinguished Member of the Government on this Irish enigma are received in this country with that anxious earnestness

1/10
Stevens June 23, 1910

naturally arising from a subject of such momentous interest.

In the report of the speech to which I have referred, you are stated to have expressed disapproval of certain suggestions for converting the present Irish tenants of small farms into independent proprietors. In this respect I fully concur with you; it is also stated that you said you cannot tell what ought to be done, and that you are willing to do what is right.

Under these circumstances you can understand why I dedicate this work to you, as it states the plan by which the Irish Land Question can be settled in a just and a peaceable way, and one which would be a thorough, and is the only proper remedy for Ireland's monster evil, landlordism.

The plan I propose is the result of much experience and reflection. Your lordship will see that I mention having travelled over nearly the whole of Ireland, and under circumstances which afforded me excellent opportunities for knowing the state of the country and the condition of its people.

My long and extensive experience, combined with careful observation, enables me to speak with confidence, when others, of less knowledge, are quite puzzled as to what should be done.

I wish much that you would visit Ireland, and judge for yourself; this is the proper way of investigation. You may rely on my statements, in case you cannot personally verify them; and any assertions I make I would substantiate with pleasure, if called on for that purpose.

My lord, it is on behalf of millions of British subjects that I address you; it is on behalf of my country, which has so long and so cruelly been ill-used by yours. I plead for justice for a moral, an intellectual, and an oppressed race. The Irish cannot remain as they are; their wrongs must have an end. Be it your glory that to the utmost of your power you have endeavoured to remove the main cause of the sufferings of this ill-used country.

The plan I propose is just, peaceful, and practical. Use your power to do an act of humanity and right to Ireland. Be assured, my lord, that if not

done legally and quickly, there is every danger that forcible measures may be resorted to. May heaven avert from us the horrors of a social convulsion! Whether successful or not, disastrous consequences are sure to result.

Remember the cost of Irish disaffection; think of the value of Irish loyalty. Society has been deranged; many men of respectable social positions imprisoned; some lives have been lost by the feeble outbreak of discontent with England's rule which took place lately; neither the jail nor the scaffold has diminished disloyalty,—far otherwise;—it can only be stayed by just legislation. If not so stayed—I repeat my solemn warning—the Irish will try the remedy so often recommended by the aristocratic Press of England for “the oppressed nationalities of Europe.” I hope such a fearful trial may never be required.

Do justice to Ireland; do what would satisfy the consciences of intelligent, moral men; abandon the rule of force; adopt that of Christian morality; do by us as you would be done by; spare our

liberty; spare our lives; deserve our loyalty;
win our affection.

**Erase the bitter memories
of the past by simple justice.**

We ask no more!

Your lordship's

obedient servant,

H. O'NEILL.

Dundalk, June, 1868.

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INTRODUCTION.

"The evil that men do lives after them."

SHAKESPEARE, *Julius Caesar*.

THE natural productiveness of Ireland, and the abilities of the Irish people, are in sad contrast to its present imperfect state of cultivation, and to the discomfort and discontent which prevail amongst its population.

Within the last forty years the means for promoting civilization, intelligence, and material wealth have been developed in Ireland to an extent which is unparalleled in history. Railways have afforded the advantages of rapid intercourse at very moderate charges, and have enabled produce to be transmitted to markets which were previously beyond access. Steam navigation has served the same useful purpose. Agricultural chemistry has been carefully studied: new and efficient fertilizers have been discovered. Agricultural implements have been much improved, and agriculture itself has taken the position of a science. Newspapers and other literary productions have been greatly reduced in price. These form some of the means of social progress of which

we have had the command within the time above mentioned ; yet they have failed to produce their natural, proper effect on us.

Our agricultural products are diminishing ; our population, instead of becoming more numerous, wealthy, and happy, is decreasing with fearful rapidity, and is a prey to poverty and discontent ; railways and steamboats have furnished facilities for the Irish to quit their native land ; literature has but served to make them more fully sensible of their sad lot, and more disgusted with some of the laws under which they live. Thus Ireland presents the extraordinary fact of a people not progressing, although they have most powerful means for advancement at their disposal.

This condition of Ireland is the reverse of what could have been possibly anticipated by political philosophers, who overlooked this one circumstance, that Ireland belongs to a few thousand land-lords, who possess a complete monopoly. These have, in consequence of their power, been able to get any benefits that have resulted from the improvements I have mentioned ; and hence it is that, while some few persons have been enriched, the nation has not ; and that, while the Irish people justly complain of many evils due to erroneous legislation, the monster evil of Ireland is landlordism.

Irish landlordism is a thoroughly English in-

stitution. For five hundred years has England been seizing on portions of our island, and planting English people on the pillaged lands. The history of these seizures, and of the struggles for five centuries of our brave ancestors to oppose them, is stated in many a book, and is the rubric of every true Irish heart. I will not go over the bloody story now, another time will answer better; but I may shortly mention that Queen Elizabeth, after a desolating war of sixteen years' duration, confiscated five hundred thousand acres of our land in the South of Ireland; this was in 1584. Her successor had hardly ascended the English throne when he also confiscated another half-million of acres of our lands in the North of Ireland (in 1606). Another fifty years and Cromwell the ruthless, after most brutal, cold-blooded slaughterings of our forefathers, having subdued the Irish, confiscated three-fourths of this fine country. Another half-century had not passed away till William III. triumphed over the people of Ireland, and again was confiscation of our lands the result. Such is one hundred years' lamentable history of our country.

From our lands thus seized on by our conquerors, our people, if possible, were to be expelled. English and Scotch people were invited to come and take possession of Ireland. The Irish might go anywhere out of their own land; here

they must not stay. They might be slaughtered on the highway, and many were so slaughtered ; the men and the boys might be transported as slaves to work in the West Indies for English land owners, and shiploads of them were so enslaved ; our girls and our marriageable women might be sent out to those same West-Indian land-lords, because they complained of a want of females for their lustful use, and shiploads of Irish women were seized and transported to gratify the passions of these Englishmen. Cromwell and his Puritan government became procurers for the West-Indian planters.

So it was in the Commonwealth days. We were slaughtered for defending our property and our lives ; cold-blooded murders in open day were legalized ; West-Indian slavery was the fate of thousands ; enslaving and debauching our women were lawful. English land-lords, English land-tillers, and no Irish to be suffered on their own lands : these were the acts, these were the rules of the tranquillizers of Ireland in brutal Cromwell's days.

YET WE WERE NOT TRANQUILLIZED !

Since the victory of William of Orange, at the end of the seventeenth century, England has ruled supreme in Ireland. For one hundred and seventy-eight years England has had Ireland at her feet. England placed land-lords over us ; it

sent its own English and Scotch land-tillers into our country ; it made the land-laws for this island. During that very long period England has been complete master in this country. The lion growling over its writhing victim is not more triumphantly dominant. England has had full power over Ireland.

WHAT IS THE RESULT ?

At the end of nearly two centuries of English supreme rule, one-fourth of Ireland is lying waste ; scarcely any part of it is properly cultivated, and the people are so disgusted with English governing, that they are ready to burst out into open rebellion whenever there is a chance of success. England's land-lords and England's land-laws have not succeeded in Ireland.

Our farmers are little better than serfs ; the tillers of the soil are in an abject state of poverty and of subjugation ; they are also in a dangerous state of discontent. It is unreasonable to think that the master-and-slave relations between landlord and tenant can continue, or that this country can prosper with the great bulk of its population steeped in poverty, and a prey to sullen discontent ; such a condition is destructive to a nation.

English confiscations, English land-lords, English land-laws, and English land-tillers, have all failed to make us satisfied with English domination.

Can such a change be made as would remove

the great evil of Ireland, the land-lords? and can that change be made peaceably and justly? After nearly two hundred years of unbounded opportunity to try English landlordism in Ireland, it is surely not asking too much to demand a change from this broken-down system.

The plan I propose would induce the land-lords to dispose of their legal rights; it would put an end to land monopoly in Ireland; it would do justice to us by realizing the patriotic aspiration of

"IRELAND FOR THE IRISH."

Several persons of undoubtedly great ability, and with the kindest dispositions, who know the wretched state of our agricultural population, have proposed plans for improving the relations between land-lord and tenant.

Mr. Bright suggests that the State should buy up the land-lord's rights, and become itself land-lord.

We have tried State land-lords too long in Ireland already, and could not expect that England would be better in the future than she has been in the past.—We have a well-founded dread of English landlordism.

Mr. Dix Hutton proposes that Government should aid the tenants to purchase their farms, and so make them squires over pocket estates of a few acres,—a plan by which our land-lords

would be increased at least some hundredfold,—a strange way of remedying the evil by multiplying the causes of our misery.

Tenant right, by which the holder is possessed in perpetuity of his farm so long as he pays his rent, is another mode of the multiplying-remedy.

Mr. Isaac Butt has proposed a sixty-three years' holding, with many very useful suggestions for regulating the land-lord and tenant arrangements.

These plans have, for their main purpose, to abrogate the power now possessed by Irish landlords of tenancy at will and summary eviction. Their talented propounders have not considered the great question of political philosophy which Paley thus expresses:—

“ AS THE LAND WAS ONCE COMMON TO ALL, BY WHAT RIGHT COULD ANY PART OF IT BE TAKEN BY ONE PERSON TO THE EXCLUSION OF ALL OTHERS.”—*Paley's Moral Phil.*, b. iii.

Another omission in these plans is that the proposed improvement in the tenant's condition is limited to the land-tillers. Now land rents in towns are incomparably heavier than they are in the country. It is true that building ground tenancy is not at will, but if a complaint of being rack-rented is often just with respect to farmers, how much more so is it respecting rents of land for building on? The farmer pays a few pounds an acre for productive land; ground to build on

is charged in many cases at the rate of several hundred pounds an acre; in some instances thousands of pounds per acre are paid for land monopoly in towns. The place thus highly rented may be a barren rock; at all events, as it is for building purposes, it is wholly unproductive.

The agricultural tenant very properly complains of the powers now possessed by the land-lord of summary eviction and non-compensation for improvements; the monopolist who lets building ground has in general the same powers.

The measures proposed in the following pages comprehend not only relieving tenants in town and country from injustice, but also that landlordism shall be done away with, and the land be made national property, to be managed by national land guardians, and for national purposes.

It is not a revolution of force that is recommended. The just rights of the land-lords are proposed to be purchased, so that they may voluntarily part with their injurious monopoly.

The modes for purchasing the lands, providing the funds, managing the national property, and using the national land income are stated.

To recommend the buying up of all private territorial monopolies, and to explain how Ireland could, in a peaceable way, be made the property of the Irish people, are my objects in this publication.

In illustrating the effects of Irish landlordism, and commenting on these effects, I do not wish to be understood as stating that all land-lords act in the way pointed out; it is the evil powers of landlordism I attack. I admit that the land-lords only use their legal rights, but these rights are ruinous to Ireland. I understand that the land-laws of Ireland and England are the same—perhaps so,—but the conditions of the two countries are not; the immense manufactories of England give employment, and check land competition: Ireland has not that relief.

THE LAND OR DEATH is the alternative with most of our small farmers.

Neither do I ascribe our land-lord evils to the English people; their aristocracy has been an affliction to them as well as to us; not so much certainly, because in England the manufacturing and commercial classes are a counterbalance to the land-lords,—we have no such check.

The facts stated in this work respecting the neglected state of this country, its capabilities, its cultivation, and the condition of its population, are mainly the result of personal experience. I have travelled much in Ireland, observed its condition, mixed with its people; naturally good powers for noting what I see, have been quickened by the circumstances of my being an Irishman who takes a deep interest in his country's welfare, and who

has children rising to take their places in the fearful struggle of life.

I know the deplorable abasement of my country, and seek to do my best for its exaltation.

CHAPTER I. A DESCRIPTION OF IRELAND.

"The emerald gem of the western world."

MOORE.

IRELAND is a most noble island; it contains about twenty-one millions of acres, and is capable of producing excellent crops of the staple articles of consumption in such abundance that a far larger population than is living here at present could be supported in great comfort.

Its present population is a little above five millions; some persons have estimated that Ireland is capable of subsisting ten times that number.

The mountains are well adapted for the growth of useful timber, as oak, ash, elm, beech, pine, larch, birch, yew, &c. Formerly the island was well wooded, but now nearly all the mountains are destitute of trees.

Besides an abundance of excellent building stone and marbles, there are many mines of lead mixed with silver; of copper, iron, sulphur, salt, coals, and some gold; as well as other precious minerals.

There are several good rivers, many noble lakes, excellent harbours, abundance of both sea and

fresh water fish. There are neither dangerous wild animals nor noxious reptiles.

This island has a mild, healthy, and genial climate; not very hot in summer, and seldom severely cold in winter. Hurricanes and great thunderstorms are rare. The scenery in many places is extremely beautiful, and altogether this fine country is admirably adapted for human beings.

The natives of Ireland are of a quick, lively disposition. Some of the greatest warriors, lawyers, statesmen, divines, orators, poets, painters, architects, sculptors, and other intellectual men and women of which Europe can boast, have been born in this country.

With the advantages Ireland possesses, it might be naturally supposed that the population is numerous, comfortable, and contented; the facts are just the reverse, the population is scant, and is diminishing daily; a large part of the people is steeped in poverty, and a strong discontent, amounting very often to sullen disloyalty, is burning at the nation's heart.

Emigration is going on at a fearful rate. Two hundred thousand persons leave Ireland annually; the money cost of their passage being above a million of pounds sterling. Those who emigrate generally do well, and send home money to their relatives to assist these to quit Ireland, or to aid them while they have to remain.

The poor Irish wanderer never forgets his native land. The poet only expressed his life-long feeling when he wrote of Ireland—

“Remember thee? yes, while there’s life in this heart,
It shall never forget thee, all lorn as thou art;
More dear in thy sorrow, thy gloom, and thy showers,
Than the rest of the world in their sunniest hours.”

“Wert thou all that I wish thee, great, glorious, and free,
First flower of the earth, and first gem of the sea,
I might hail thee with prouder, with happier brow,
But oh! could I love thee more deeply than now?”

MOORE.

The Irish emigrant never forgets that Ireland is his country, nor loses the hope of seeing his beloved island freed from land-lord tyranny.

“The savage loves his native shore,
Though rude the soil, and chill the air;
Then well may Erin’s sons adore
Their isle which nature formed so fair.”

JAMES ORR.

The practical goodness of heart and self-denial so many of these emigrants display by sending sums of money to their relatives and friends, are deserving of the highest admiration. Having a photographic gallery gives me many opportunities of hearing of the merit and generosity of those expatriated Irish who liberally share their earnings with the less fortunate relatives and friends they have left behind.

Ireland is one of the finest islands in the world;

its natives are a highly gifted race, yet they are steeped in poverty, and are flying from their beloved island; this island being one of the most valuable and most desirable in the habitable globe.

The purchase value of Ireland is, at least, one thousand millions of pounds sterling. Ireland is the emerald gem of the western world.

CHAPTER II.

WHO OWN IRELAND?

What God makes the landlord takes.

If a person who does not know how the fact really is were asked, Who own Ireland? he would naturally and unhesitatingly reply, Of course the natives ; they must, no doubt, be the owners of Ireland. This very reasonable idea is the reverse of fact.

This island is the property of a few thousand persons, many of whom were not even born in Ireland, most of whom do not live in it, and nearly the whole of whom detest the country and its people—such persons are no more to be considered as Irish than are the aborigines of Australia; their

sympathies are what are called English, by which is meant that they are anti-Irish.

Ireland for the Irish, is an honest, patriotic wish, which has yet to be realized.

Nearly every acre of Ireland belongs to a few thousand land-lords: they possess a complete monopoly of the island. The mountains and the valleys, the lakes and the rivers are theirs; they also own all the wild birds and beasts on the land, and all the fish in the lakes and rivers; they have Ireland for one vast zoological garden. They also own the precious mineral wealth that the Almighty power of the universe has hidden in the depths of the land.

There is one subject respecting the owners of Ireland which must be noticed, that is, the rents they draw out of the country. I have seen the amount stated at four millions annually; I suspect this sum is far too little; but as absenteeism is also injurious to our country in other ways, by depriving us of the advantages naturally resulting from a resident proprietary, I think we may fairly set down our detriment from absentee land-lords at from eight to ten millions of pounds per annum.

All this heavy loss results from England's acts in forcing these foreigners on us. For nearly two hundred years absenteeism has been draining us; it is actually a British brigandage on Ireland, and Britain is in all justice bound to repay this

damage to us ; taking it at the very moderate sum of two millions per annum for two centuries, it amounts to four hundred millions of money, of which Ireland has been plundered by English land-lords ; every penny of that is a just debt. I hope England will pay this sum. The injury we have suffered in consequence of English land-lords and land-laws, England can never satisfy. Meantime, I trust that a stop will be put to absenteeism at once ; no more looting by way of absentee rents. If these foreigners will not stay in Ireland, let their rents stay here.

All the gold, silver, copper, lead, iron, coals, salt, and other minerals belong to the land-lords ; every grain of sand on the sea shore, every fragment of wreck cast upon the beach, the very seaweed that grows in the sea, the oysters, the cockles, and mussels belong to them ; everything that money can be made of they claim.

Ireland does not belong to the Irish ; it is monopolized by a few thousand persons. It may be said of nearly all the Irish that they do not own as much of Ireland as would sod a lark.

The land monopolists own every field that is cultivated by Irish farmers, or grazed by Irish flocks or herds ; they own the bogs that yield turf, and the bare rocks that yield nothing ; all the land, cultivated or uncultivated, fertile or barren.

They also own the land on which every house

stands in every city, town, village, and hamlet in Ireland.

In answer to the question, Who own Ireland ?
I reply;

Ireland belongs to a few thousand persons, who are chiefly absentees, and are thereby as much foreigners as if they were born and lived among the primitive inhabitants of the Antipodes.

Eight thousand five hundred persons are landlords, water-lords, game-lords, fish-lords, mine-lords, sand-lords, seaweed-lords, wreck-lords, oyster-lords, cockle-lords, and lords of anything else they can make money of, but which they never made themselves.

CHAPTER III.

HOW IS IRELAND CULTIVATED ?

"Alas, poor country."—SHAKESPEARE, *Macbeth*.

LET us now inquire, How is the land cultivated under the proprietors placed over the Irish nation by England ?

I have traversed the greater part of Ireland, and have noticed the state of the land with respect to its profitable use ; as an observation of a general

character, I agree with every writer on the subject that the productive powers of Ireland are not properly developed.

What the land has to produce are corn and root crops, pasturage, and timber.

As an instance of the management of the land with respect to its profitable use, let us take the magnificent plain of Leinster, which lies between the hills south of Dublin and those north of Dundalk, sixty miles in extent each way; no place in Ireland is more favourably circumstanced for developing what Lord Dufferin styles "consummate cultivation." It has Dublin on its coast, as well as Drogheda and Dundalk, two other important seaport towns. Dublin, including its extensive suburbs, contains nearly half a million of persons; it is the chief port of transit between England and Ireland, and is the capital of this island. The soil of this Leinster plain is, in general, favourable for agriculture. These combined advantages would naturally induce the best farming; but any one who has seen English farming is struck with the inferior character of the husbandry in this favoured locality; yet, except about Belfast, I have not seen better farming in Ireland.

The weeds are often suffered to overrun the crops, and the corn fields are, at times while the crop is still green, thick with a wild cabbage weed called praiseach (*brassica*), the grazed land with

ragwort, the meadows with crowsfoot, while the ditch banks are crowded with those pernicious plants, docks, dandelion, thistles, couchgrass, and kindred nuisances, of which there will almost inevitably be some in the cultivated lands.

This management is very properly termed dirty farming,—it is very inferior to what I have seen in England.

The mode of farming in Ireland is, in many respects, different from that in England; the English fields and farms are much larger, the horses far more powerful, and the farm vehicles (waggons in England, carts and cars in Ireland) used on the English farms are a vast deal larger. I have never seen in Ireland such barns as are usual on English farms—immense structures for securing the corn crop of the farm under cover, and into which the teams of great horses can draw the loaded waggons.

Such barns are, I believe, no where in Ireland.

The little structures called barns in Ireland form part of the out-offices, and serve merely for thrashing corn, storing the thrashed-out grain, and similar uses.

In fact the farming operations in Ireland are, in general, conducted on a very small scale; the farms are mostly about ten acres, often less; a small cart, a small horse or an ass, a few simple implements, a dung heap before the door,

and such scanty means, or so much credit, as will enable the tenant to crop the land and exist till he can get in the produce, and you have the stock-in-trade of the greater part of the Irish farmers.

As for a barn, that is a rarity; I have seen the corn thrashed on the public road, and winnowed from a sieve on a breezy day in the grass field behind the cabin.

The Irish small farmer has no plough, he borrows one, and pays for the hire by working as a day labourer; the out-offices of such a small farmer would be an ass's shed, a pig-sty, and a shelter for the ass's car beneath the rick of turf.

I need hardly say that I have been describing the humblest of the Irish small farmers.

Irish farming is far behind the farming I have seen in England. Scotch farming is said to be the best in the British islands, and Irish farming the worst.

Quite close to Dublin farming is rather carefully conducted,—it must be so to pay £10 or £12 an acre rent, besides county rates and cess,—but within four or five miles of that great city slovenly farming is often seen.

CHAPTER IV.

UNCULTIVATED LANDS.

"Nature's awful waste."—CAMPBELL'S *Last Man*.

WE have seen the imperfect way in which land is cultivated in this country, and that this slovenly farming is carried on even close to Dublin; I have now to show that large tracts of land, which admit of profitable cropping, are left wholly uncultivated and profitless; in fact nearly one-fourth of Ireland is lying waste.

On the bleak sides of mountains in the County Wicklow, where now the land is wholly unproductive, there are the traces of cultivation; these are ascribed to the ancient Irish before the English came into this country, and when the hills around Lough Dan bore noble trees, some trunks of which I have seen disinterred. At present these hills are in stern nakedness. If these hills were timber clothed, not only would a shelter be given by the woods to such crops as might be cultivated on the open and suitable spaces, but the land, now sterile, would be fertilized by the leaves and other droppings from the trees, to say nothing of the value of the timber crop.

The soil of America has been so enriched by its

timber that, for fifty years, lands, cleared of their woods, have been annually cropped, and yielded fine harvests without any manuring.

I have seen ancient furrows in other counties where now no crop could be raised.

The County Wicklow is near Dublin; its nearest boundary is only ten miles from Dublin.

The climate of this county is particularly mild, the scenery lovely, soil good, people gentle, peaceable, loyal, obliging ; yet, except in some favoured districts near the coast, this beautiful and alluring county is destitute of gentry, and a large part of it is totally desolate. I have walked through this neglected waste, in the middle of a fine summer's day, above ten miles of the public road without seeing a human being, and this, remember, only a few miles from Dublin ; in this long distance there is not a house, not a cabin. I started a few grouse, and saw one starved frog, no other signs of life, not as much as a house fly ; it was "Nature's awful waste," such as Thomas Campbell describes in "The Last Man," and I felt as dreary, as lonely, and heart-sunken as the poet's imaginary remnant of humanity.

This tract is over fifty square miles in extent—fifty square miles, not ten miles from Dublin, totally uninhabited except in a few narrow valleys ! thirty-two thousand acres producing nothing but worthless heath and the coarsest rushy grass.

I need scarcely add that this is a mountain district.

A fine road traverses this desolate region; the rock is granite, and some micaceous schist; the soil, as usual on Irish mountains, dry bog, in some places of great depth, possibly twenty feet or more of dry turf bog. An excellent road was made through this district about the commencement of the present century; some of the deep turf banks were then cut through. I have seen embedded in these banks as fine stems of oak as ever grew; I have not seen finer growing anywhere in Ireland. These stems are the remains of ancient forests.

Ireland, formerly so abounded in trees that it was called the wooded island. Now Ireland is very bare of timber. These fine trees and these marks of cultivation show that the place is well suited for the growth of timber, and that, if judiciously planted, the waste land could, in some places, be cultivated for grain crops.

More than half the Co. Wicklow is waste land.

Extract from Jonathan Pim's "Condition and Prospects of Ireland, 1848."

(P. 115.) "It is impossible for those who have not visited the western coast of Ireland to form an adequate idea of that country or of the condition of its inhabitants. The land is occupied for the most part by vast and dreary bogs, and wet or rocky mountains; it is generally quite destitute of trees for many miles inland; there are pro-

bably thousands of women and children on the western coast who have never seen a shrub more than four feet high. The cultivated portions lie in small patches, generally on the borders of rivers. From the moisture of the climate and the depth of the bogs, **MANY OF WHICH CONSIST OF THE DECAYED REMAINS OF ANCIENT FORESTS**, the task of draining and reclaiming them for purposes of tillage must be one of great difficulty, involving an amount of outlay utterly beyond the reach of most of the present occupiers or proprietors."

(170.) "The cultivation of waste lands in Ireland has often been proposed. . . . No one can doubt the important results which must ensue."

He mentions waste land being reclaimed by allowing cottiers to have it rent free for a few years, and when reclaimed either they had to pay rent or give it up.

That much of our bog land could be cultivated either for food crops or for wood crops, is beyond doubt, but a more extensive system of draining than the present proprietors can act on is necessary in many cases.

The bogs on the Shannon, below Athlone, are so extensive that they look like a vast sea of dreary brown, yet in many places they are well elevated above the river; and even where subject to flooding, from lying low, they could be well drained by a proper regulation of the Shannon itself.

Again, the dreary tract of bogs which lies

between Kilrush and Kilkee, in the Co. Clare, and which is peculiarly wild and exposed to the Atlantic hurricanes, so much so that the cottiers, to prevent their roofs being whirled off, are obliged to cover them with a strong network of ropes which is held on by numbers of heavy stones ; even this land of storms would bear timber, for timber is found in the bogs, a proof of trees having grown there formerly, and there are two trees actually there ; stunted and gnarled as they are, the wonder is how they have outlived the bleak loneliness of their trying situation ; these are the only trees for many miles around, they stand by the roadside in front of a house, and in one of them a couple of magpies have had their nest for years. As these trees grow there, unsheltered as they are, a number of trees would grow much better, and they would serve to shelter the cropped land, and also be a source of profit in themselves.

It is a notion with some that trees will not grow in bogs ; this is an error. I have not only seen the roots of ancient forests, in their natural position, in bogs, but have seen plantations thriving, and full grown timber living and doing well in bogs.

Is it not deplorable that millions of acres are profitless, which, if properly drained and planted or cropped would be a great source of national wealth to this poor country ?

The tendency of the land of Ireland is to become boggy ; this is owing to the humid nature of the air, and its rather low and equable temperature : it is counteracted by draining and cultivation. Thus we see that millions of acres, now all but useless, could be advantageously cropped.

A remarkable instance of tree roots in bogs in their natural position occurs near Youghal, on the south of that town ; the sea coast there is shingle and sand, beneath these is bog ; all pure turf as far as low water mark, how much farther I cannot say ; but the sand having been swept off by a storm left the understratum of bog bare, and there I saw at nearly a quarter of a mile from high water mark, and where there must be several feet in depth of water when the tide is in, the roots and stumps of large trees in their places as they grew. There are bog and timber also under the sea at Tramore, Co. Waterford, and at that very wild place, Whiting bay, same county ; also very deep bog under Lough Ouler, Co. Cavan : these I have seen.

There are many lakes in this country which cover bogs ; a proper system of drainage would carry off the water ; thus not only gaining additional land, but also raising the temperature of the island, which is kept low by the great quantity of surface water on it at present. It would be a great advantage if the annual amount

ef heat in this country could be increased ; water has a great avidity for heat, and, by absorbing it, lowers the temperature ; this, in Ireland, is a downright evil. A course of proper draining would make the climate of Ireland warmer.

CHAPTER V.

WHY NOT PLANTED?

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods."—BYRON.

ABOUT one-fourth of Ireland is waste, that is, above five millions of acres. These immense and profitless tracts could bear excellent timber crops.

Why not planted?

The answer is, because the land is owned by Irish land-lords. The proprietors are unwilling, in many cases unable, to defray the heavy cost of putting in timber crops.

A timber crop is very expensive to plant, and many years must elapse before there is any profit. The proprietor of a large estate, of which the nominal rental may be thirty or forty thousand a-year, has generally heavy mortgages on it, which must absorb a great part of the rental;

there will also be jointures, dowries, and other incumbrances; a number of needy, idle, spunging relations, too proud to work for their living; possibly a few pledges of illicit indulgence,—I heard one gentleman of property boast of eighty-four,—these, with their mothers, have to be provided for; very probably there is a spendthrift son in the army, whose reckless extravagance has to be met; there may be an aspiring son in the Church—an expensive profession; a few daughters to be portioned; some expensive passions of his own. Then an appearance equal to the nominal rental of the estate must be kept up as well as possible: pampered horses, expensive, wasteful servants—these keep the owner always in difficulties; yet he must subscribe to the local charities, and to the home and foreign missions: such a man of nominal wealth is actually steeped in want—want of money,—his bank account is almost always overdrawn.

In order to keep afloat, the land owner may borrow a few thousands from his agent, hard cash that will never be repaid. The agent knows this, and has to squeeze it, Valentine M'Clutchy fashion, out of the tenants, as M'Clutchys know well how to do.

If the agent cannot screw the money out of the tenants, it is nearly a dead certainty that the money will be a dead loss.

Mr. Jonathan Pim, in his work previously quoted, thus describes the Irish landlords:—

(P. 45.) “The pecuniary circumstances of the landed proprietors generally, arising in some cases out of family charges, and resulting in others from improvidence or carelessness, possibly of former proprietors, disable many of even the best disposed landlords from improving their property.”

And Mr. Pim quotes from the Report of the Commissioners for Enquiry into the Occupation of Land in Ireland:—

(P. 48.) “Is it extraordinary that the land of Ireland has remained so long unimproved? The owners in fee, in many cases, have no interest in its improvement, it would not increase their rental. The life possessor has little anxiety to improve at the expense of his younger children.”

Many an heir who succeeds to an estate has involved himself in debts incurred before he became proprietor, of course at very heavy interest; the estate is most likely encumbered with the widow's dowry, the sisters' jointures, and other family charges; thus, with a large rental, he has a small income, on which he cannot maintain his position; he flies to the continent, where, at a moderate cost, and in a quiet way, he can live comfortably within his means.

An agent has to manage the property, if possible to clear off its debts,—the highest rents, the strictest landlordism, and not a penny on improvements, must be his plan.

I knew one of the best land-lords in Ireland, a noble marquis, whose lands were not only subjected to dowry, jointures, and provision for some extravagant brothers, but who had also to redeem from the cellars of one of those pawn-brokers of the upper ten thousand—a bank—the family service of gold plate deposited by his father as security for a large sum.

I doubt that there is one estate in Ireland free from encumbrances.

How can such embarrassed men plant? they can hardly keep their estates out of the Landed Estates Court—a court established purposely to relieve proprietors of Irish lands from their heavy encumbrances, and in which, during the few years it has been acting, I have read that about one-fifth of Ireland, or above four millions of acres, have been sold. These men cannot even drain their lands or build cottages for their labourers without assistance: Government helps them with loans of money to do these things.

Formerly the Royal Dublin Society promoted planting in Ireland, by means of premiums; land-lords will not cultivate timber without some such inducement, except for merely ornamental purposes. As a rule, land-lords will do nothing to improve their properties unless there is a quick return. Trees, a slow growing crop, will never be a land-lord's crop; potatoes, or corn, or turnips, whatever

comes rotund in a year, they will cultivate, or the crop that runs on four legs—sheep and cattle,—these are saleable in a year or two, these suit the Irish landlord and the Irish tenant; as for woods, formerly they were abundant here, but the spendthrift Irish gentry cut them down, sold them, and spent the money.

"O ! the land-lords of Ireland were fine sporting blades," and they have sported their estates into the Landed Estates Court; they have sold nearly every stick of timber they could lay their hands on, and have left this ill-used country as bare of timber, as if the proper business of their lives was to ruin Ireland and themselves.

Yet an immense quantity of trees could be cultivated in the desolate parts of Ireland—a crop that would in time be worth many millions annually to the country.

Such is the state of Ireland as respects its agricultural products; the part that is cultivated is but badly farmed, and a very large portion of it that could be worked with great advantage, is nearly as useless a waste as the wildest deserts of Arabia. This is the result of the landlordism England has forced on us.

After nearly two centuries of these English land-lords and land-laws, our agricultural condition is a disgrace to our rulers, and a heavy loss to ourselves.

Iron mines were formerly worked in Ireland, they are not exhausted; unlike the English mines, coal is not always found with the iron ore; wood was used for smelting, and iron equal to the best Swedish was produced. The mines had to be stopped when our woods became exhausted: they could be worked again if we had timber.

Fuel is very scarce in some parts of this country; woods give a large supply of firing.

There are manufactures which could be carried on if firing were more plenty.

Ireland loses many millions annually for want of woods. Landlordism must be done away with in order that Ireland may be properly wooded.

CHAPTER VI. IRISH LAND-LORDS' POWER.

“I have been your slave too long,
And you have ruled me with a rod of iron.”
Play of the Earl of Warwick.

THE monopoly of the land-lords is complete; the only exception to land-lord monopoly is the “Ulster Tenant-right”—a right, by the way, which is only enforced in some parts of Ulster,—a right which the land-lords have not been able to set aside,

because they have an armed Protestant yeomanry to deal with,—but a right which is not legalized.

With the above exception the English land-lord system is as thorough a monopoly of the island as human ingenuity could devise. The land-lord can cultivate the land, or he can let it lie idle; he can farm it himself, or he can let it to others; the land rent may be raised to the last penny that can be squeezed out of the tenant; the tenant can be turned out of his holding whenever the land-lord pleases, unless he has the protection of a lease, which Irish land-lords seldom give; he can be evicted even though he has paid his rack-rent to the uttermost farthing. English land-laws give every security, every power to the land-lord; there is no security for the tenant: he is by the law flung at the land owner's feet; he is a serf—a slave in his native land. The land-lords have a monopoly as complete as laws can make it. “The land is their's, and the fulness thereof:” “they can do what they like with their own.” This noble island is at the mercy of a few thousand land monopolists, most of whom are absentees, and who derive several millions of money annually from their monopoly; who have the land only very imperfectly cultivated, who have a large part of the island waste, and who have reduced a body of people, that would naturally be the pride of their country

—the tillers of the soil,—into a state of abject subjugation.

Are not Irish land-lords a great evil to Ireland? I hesitate not to say that they are the monster evil.

Every Irish land-lord has the power by law of making his own arrangements with the land-tiller, —not that these arrangements are made personally by the land-lord,—an agent does this business, and it is whispered that, in order to soften his feelings, palm oil is found an admirable lubricator; be that as it may, the large number of poor fellows who want land have no chance in bargaining with the few wealthy owners of the land monopoly, hence the limit of the land-lord's (or agent's) claim will be the utmost excess that can be enforced from the tiller; on the side of the tenant there is nothing but poverty, and no law; on that of the land owner there is monopoly secured by many a law, and backed by money and social position. Ireland shews the result.

The regulations on some Irish estates tell how much the tenant is at the mercy (?) of his land-lord.

The tenants generally hold at the caprice of the agent, so that they can be evicted for any cause, just or unjust.

The tenant cannot crop but as the agent pleases.

No persons but the actual resident members of the family shall be allowed to sleep more than one night at the farm house.

No member of the tenant's family shall marry without the agent's permission.

These are rules enforced on some estates,—their violation subjects the tenant to immediate eviction.

Besides these rules the tenant is expected, and is obliged, on pain of eviction, to vote as the land-lord dictates.

As if these were not enslaving enough, religion is prostituted to the evil purpose of worrying the tenantry with controversial tracts and proselytizing temptations; the land-lord or his agent being generally Protestant, of course is a zealous advocate of the home missions, and sometimes goes to great lengths in his "converting," or, rather, tormenting operations.

Thus, under English landlordism, our rural population is reduced from being "a bold peasantry, their country's pride," to that of land slaves,—they are the serfs of the land monopolists.

It may be said that, as the land-lords are gentlemen, it cannot be supposed that they would treat the poor tenants unjustly, or even harshly; this is a fallacy. Gentlemen will, on ordinary occasions, act justly by one another, though even among each other they can act far otherwise at times; but for unprincipled rascality and unfeeling cruelty, for every vice that can debase humanity, and for every crime that can appal it, some gentlemen are as ready as "any other man." From my experience

of gentlemen land-lords, I can say that I have found many that did not act unjustly or harshly ; some few acted most kindly, and some acted as thorough villains. Being gentlemen does not necessarily imply justice or humanity. The state of our Irish land-tillers shows that this is true.

Conditions which make the farmer a serf will only be submitted to by men of very limited means, and to whom the land is a vital necessity ; men possessing capital must have better terms, or they will emigrate ; hence leases are in some cases granted to the monied farmers, and hence also this class of agriculturists has furnished an important quota to the immense numbers of emigrants that have left this country.

But the poor class of farmers who are compelled to remain, to whom land is an imperative necessity, who possess very little money, and who have not means to emigrate, will be obliged to pay rack-rents for a few acres, just as much as they may be able to manage with their very small capital : men in their circumstances, will of necessity, submit to almost any conditions to get the land ; but such cultivators cannot improve their holdings ; indeed, as tenants at will, they have a direct interest against improving, for being wholly in the agent's grasp, he would be sure to raise the rent the moment he saw any indications that the tenant was doing well.

I do not limit these observations to farm holdings. Tenants in towns often find it impossible to get leases, and are subjected to arbitrary eviction, and raising of rent, as farm tenants are. I know instances in which tenants made a good trade reputation, created a business, as the phrase goes, had advertised freely, and were evicted, though the rent was paid to the day; such a proceeding is likely to prove the ruin of the unfortunate sufferers. In another case a tenant has submitted to have his rent raised three distinct times sooner than give up a position in which he has made a character, and he does not know how soon his rent may be further raised.

Another tenant at will, depending on his landlord's promise not to put him out so long as he paid the rent, went to an outlay of nearly twenty pounds in putting in a new shop front and making some other little improvements; on the next rent-day he received notice to quit, his eviction being the result of his improvements having so far increased the value of the premises that another tenant agreed to give an increased rent.

Another case I may mention that occurred to a relative of mine. This farmer, having a family of well-grown sons, was induced, by the owner of one of the uncultivated Kerry hills, to take a part of it for a farm, at a moderate rent, without a lease; he and his sons built a dwelling, fenced the

land, stumped up the furze, sunk or removed the loose rocks, blasted others, drained the wet springs, and, after some years' hard labour, a comfortable farm was the result—remember the land was held on the landlord's promise of possession so long as the rent was paid, yet he was evicted to make way for another who offered a higher rent, though my relative did not owe a penny; the result was, that the sons levelled the house and the fences; for these outrages some had to fly, one was transported, the whole family was ruined, and certain newspapers were filled with an account of “an atrocious outrage.”

I remember a circumstance that occurred about thirty years ago:—A land-lord endeavoured to seduce either the wife or the daughter of a farmer, who resented the outrage in strong language; the land-lord, in spite, prosecuted his tenant, and cast him into prison; while the man was incarcerated a seizure was made for rent, the tenant's little property was sold, and the family turned out; none of the other tenants would dare to give them shelter, but a hovel was built against a bank for the poor outcasts; there a fever soon carried off his wife and one of his children. After the farmer got out of prison he attempted to shoot, or did shoot, his late landlord—either way he was hung. The papers rang with the story of “*another atrocious murder.*” The peasantry whispered that the

villain who was shot had got only what he richly deserved ; land-lords and very respectable people called the farmer a scoundrel ; tenants and people not so very respectable thought the land-lord was the scoundrel who deserved hanging. I do not decide ; I tell the tale as I found it in the papers of the day, and heard it from the whisperers.

Such fearful anecdotes might be told by the hundred. Land-lords who have unbounded power, and tenants who have human passions, are sure to produce tragic events.

Another incident or two will be quite enough to illustrate this very melancholy part of my subject.

In the year 1851 there appeared in the *Times* a statement from S. G. O. relative to a trial for murder which took place in Kerry. It seems that a widow woman held a small farm on the Kerry estate of the Marquis of Lansdowne. A daughter of the old woman had gone to America, leaving her son, a boy about ten years old, in the care of the child's grandmother. Receiving this child under her roof was a violation of the rules of the estate, which forbade any but the actual resident members of the family to sleep more than one night on any of the farms, and for this violation she was evicted. The orphan, released from almost any control, naturally became a wanderer. One dreary wintry night he came to the house

where the grandmother had been allowed by the agent to take up her residence with a relation, another tenant on the estate; the poor outcast boy sought a shelter with his grandmother, which she would have willingly given, but the tenant feared expulsion if he harboured the boy,—I should have mentioned that the tenants had been warned not to give him shelter,—a struggle ensued; the poor little fellow was roughly used; he crawled away, and next morning was found dead against a wall near the house.

This occurred on an absentee's estate—an English nobleman's.

The Marquis of Lansdowne's property is in the South of Ireland. The North of Ireland can boast of as thorough landlordism as we find in Munster. Isaac Butt mentions, in one of his publications on the Irish land-lord and tenant subject, the eviction of a tenant in Ulster for giving a temporary shelter to a widowed daughter, who had, on the death of her husband, returned to her father's house till her affairs would be arranged. The father lost his farm for thus harbouring his bereaved child.

As for the rule against marrying without the agent's leave, I have seen a similar notice mentioned in English papers respecting a Welch property belonging to certain maiden ladies; so Irish estates are not the only ones on which God's

command to increase and multiply is countermanded by landowners.

In order to properly comprehend the relative positions of land owners and land tillers, we must bear in mind that land is an imperative necessity to those farmers who are in needy circumstances, that the few land owners have a thorough monopoly of the soil, that they are not restrained by any law, and that on one side there are the few wealthy and powerful land owners, on the other the numerous and needy tillers of the soil; anything like a fair competition is under such circumstances impossible. The only competition is between the tiller and death; he must have the land, or die; and the land owner, having every advantage on his side, will force up the rent to the last penny the tenant can pay and live;—he does more; he forces up the rent beyond the bare existence point, and if prosperous harvests bless the land, then the land-lord squeezes out the debt which the tenant contracted from his inability to pay and live; or possibly cuts everything the tenant owns, turns him out a beggar, and replaces him by some other unfortunate agricultural adventurer. Such small farmers will pay the highest rent, hence they suit the land-lords.

Another advantage land-lords derive from such serf-like tenants is political power; their votes are considered as much the property of the land-lord

as the farms the tenants hold, and woe to the voter who dares to use his suffrage contrary to the will of his land-lord.

A few days before writing the last sentence, a case was tried between land-lord and tenant, I will not mention names,—it is the land-lord system, not land-lords, that I am censuring,—the land-lord, a captain in the army, took proceedings to evict a tenant who holds five acres of land at £2 an acre. The ground, when the tenant took it, was a useless bog, most of it swamped with water during the wet season, which in this country implies the greater part of the year, but the tenant knew that it could be drained, and might then be made productive. This man was bailiff to the captain, and about six years back he took the five acres of bog on a promise of ten years' possession; at the last election the tenant voted against the captain's wishes, this gentleman thereupon dismissed him from his office, and sought to evict him; at the hearing of the case the land-lord swore that the ten years' promise had never been given, the tenant swore it had, so did the agent, so did some others; the court believed that the tenant told truth, and ruled accordingly.

Very little need be said on this case; we cannot conclude that the land-lord perjured himself, for he may have forgotten his promise; I do not judge him, but that he wanted to deprive his tenant of

the just results of his labour in reclaiming the five acres of worthless swamp, is clear enough, and is a sad illustration of land-lord honour; the tenant lost his situation for voting against his land-lord's will, and his farm was sought to be taken from him also, an act of injustice against the tiller who had by his labour converted a waste into productive soil.

The papers of the first month in 1868 contain accounts of evictions, though the tenants had paid all rent due. These cases very probably have reference to voting.

In Donegal, some years back, a bailiff was found dead on a hill side, from violence; no clue could be got to the perpetrators of the crime; the landlord noticed all the tenants of the locality, that if they did not divulge who was the murderer they would be all evicted; no revelation was made, and the tenants were evicted: there was no proof whatever that these tenants had any act or part in the murder, or any knowledge as to who had committed the offence.

Nearly 300 persons were thus driven off the estate.

English proprietors can act an arbitrary part as well as Irish land-lords; an English baronet not long since evicted a tenant because he quarrelled with a neighbour!

Isaac Butt has shortly expressed his opinion, and

that of those who know the land-lord and tenant relations, when he said that, from the coercion of a vote to purposes of the basest kind the land-lord has used his power against his tenant.

As nine-tenths of the land-lords are Protestants, and the greater part of the tenants Roman Catholics, and as the Protestant interest in Ireland is aggressive, a new element of unpleasantness is introduced; instead of being linked in social kindness, the land owner and the tenant have too often that adverse feeling which religious antipathy creates.

Under the serf-like state of tenancy at will, and with the greed for land which prevails in Ireland, it may be naturally supposed that evictions are very frequent here. Lord Belmore, last session, moved for a return of evictions during the last six years, including 1867; the total was 37,164, this gives an average of 6,194 a year. But in one year, 1840, there were 50,000 evictions.

Mr. Pim states:—

(P. 58.) “Sometimes ejectments have been effected on a large scale. The inhabitants of whole villages have been turned adrift at once, without a home to go to, without any prospect of employment, or any certain means of subsistence.”

No wonder that the people are flying from land-lord oppression! We cannot be surprised that hundreds of thousands leave Ireland annually.

CHAPTER VII.

EMIGRATION.

"A home and a country remain not for me."—CAMPBELL.

WHILE every lover of Ireland must deeply deplore the excessive emigration which is going on, and which has been going on for a long time, it would be a great mistake to ascribe it wholly to landlordism. I had recently a conversation with a captain of a vessel; he came over with timber from British America. This captain told me that he had purchased fifty acres of land for £50; there was no rent to pay; he held his farm as an estate. The land was good, and about three miles from a small town, where a market could be had for the farm produce; but that in general he kept his corn till dealers came to him, purchased it, and took it away.

So long as America offers estates for a smaller sum than a farm can be rented for in Ireland, we cannot expect that emigration will cease. Such a farm as the captain's would, most likely, be moderately rented at £100 a-year, if in Ireland.

Men possessed of energy or ready cash will have strong inducements to emigrate, so long as estates can be got at the other side of the Atlantic on

anything like the favourable terms America offers at present.

There are other advantages which induce young men of spirit to go to America. The American constitution is one especially framed for the productive classes, as that of England is for the aristocracy ; and a country where all men are politically equal ; where there is no alien church, nor any state church ; where the whole community is industrious, energetic, prosperous ; in which there is no feudal, idle, ruling class, is that to which young men of spirit and energy will resort as an asylum from the poverty, the abjectness, and the serfdom which constitute their lot in this country.

Republican America will for many years to come, be the holy-land of those who long for liberty and equality. Such men will go westward. If they ever return, it will be as armed foes to that power from whose rule they have fled, with such feelings of hostility as the Israelites had, when they flung off the rule of the brick-exacting monarch of Egypt.

While, then, it would be a mistake to suppose that Irish landlordism is the sole cause of emigration from this country, it is well to know the extent of it, and at the same time to recollect that this landlordism has a good deal to do with the Irish Exodus.

Emigration from this country has been at the rate of one hundred and fifty thousand for the last twenty-five years; nearly four millions of persons have left Ireland in that time—a number equal to the population of a nation. Each year now about two hundred thousand are quitting the country; this amounts to the whole of the residents in a very large town. Except Dublin, there is no city or town in Ireland with a population equal to the vast host of fugitives who quit this country in a single year.

A great change must be made in the government of Ireland—its laws and its management—in order to check this fearful drain of the most energetic part of the people. One of these changes is to do away with landlordism, and make the land national property, so that every native of Ireland who resides in it may know that Ireland is for the Irish.

While we have tenancy at will, rack-renting, voting at land-lord dictation on pain of eviction, and the other evils of landlordism in Ireland; and estates free of all rent in America, emigration will go on.

So impatient of landlordism are land tillers on the other side of the Atlantic, that, in Prince Edward's Island, British North America, a movement was made some years back to do away with land-lords altogether, the rent being

only one shilling an acre ; yet this trifling exaction was borne so impatiently by the farmers, that government bought up the land-lords' rights, and so made the land rent free.

Lord Lifford, in his "Plea for Irish Landlords," mentions the attachment of the Irish peasantry to their land-lords prior to 1826. I will not stop now to dispute this erroneous assertion, but merely mention that in the year stated O'Connell broke through the system of tenants voting according to their land-lords' will ; that, in three years after, the penal laws were repealed ; that after that came steam navigation across the Atlantic, and penny newspapers ; these have been prime causes in the changes which have taken place respecting the question of land-lord and tenant,—changes which national education has powerfully aided.

We can never expect to have the same contentment on the land-lord question now as of old with democratic newspapers at a penny, and democratic America accessible in a few days ; that "the sympathy of the whole population is with those who would down with landlordism"—as Lord Lifford states—I do not think is the case ; if it be so all the better, provided the change be accomplished justly. That there is also a desire to do away with the British crown, may or may not be a fact ; as I have nothing to do with that matter I leave it alone, merely observing that if we would

have people loyal we must have them comfortable, —an empty belly, an empty pocket, and a raggedy back, united with an intellect not wholly uncultivated, are sure sources of disloyalty.

There are duties which are stronger than a deep veneration for an absentee supreme ruler; those which we owe to our family and our friends, and if some of the Irish are convinced that the British crown is to them but a worthless bauble, and that the British sceptre is to them a rod of iron, that by its power over them they and all dear to them are suffering injustice, I am not surprised at their disloyalty, however much I may regret whatever amount of error there may be in their opinions.

Do justice to Ireland, and depend on it people will not trouble themselves with that very troublesome topic, disloyalty.

Ourselves and our families are our first concern. Until those causes of suffering are removed, which our rulers can remove, we cannot reasonably be expected to be a thoroughly loyal people.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ENGLISH PRESS.

"Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil?"

SHAKESPEARE, *Julius Cæsar*.

THAT Ireland has just cause to find fault with the way she has been ruled by England, is admitted by all who understand the past and present state of this island.

From the time of King John to that of William III., that is, for five hundred years, our country was engaged in an almost continuous struggle to repel our English invaders. In 1699 we suffered our last defeat. The party of the nation was conquered; and from that time, for many a long day, legislation was against the people of this country. The heinous laws which were then passed tended not alone to degrade the whole of the Roman Catholic population; their effect was also to degrade the small portion of Protestants who belonged to the Anglo-Irish party, and who were the only section of the Irish people—although only a very small part of the population—to whom the benefits of English freedom were allowed. This comparative handful of Episcopalianists, thus unjustly cherished by England,

accustomed to the gross intolerance which the laws enacted, were necessarily rendered rampant, bigoted intolerants themselves. Religion was prostituted for purposes of the greatest wrong. So completely had the principles of ascendancy become engrafted on the intellects of the members of the Anglo-Irish Church that they do not seem to have ever dreamed of the possibility of acting otherwise than as oppressors of the nation. Their oppression was combined with that special fatuity of mind, that disease of the moral sense and the reasoning powers which party—either in politics or religion—produces, and by which the patient is reduced below the level of rationality. This party monomania is a dreadful evil; I have seen its religious form in full operation for many years before the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, and speak from my own knowledge. Although that act has removed the legal disabilities of the nation, it has not cured the moral disease of Protestant ascendancy; in fact the parliamentary prescription has not had time to work; thirty-nine years have elapsed since the Bill was passed, but no one who knows the very slow progress which has been made in the way of clearing the minds of many Protestants from the virus of their old ailment, can hope that it will be totally eradicated under many years of political counter-irritation.

Bearing in mind what has been stated in the previous chapters on the subjects of the relations between landlord and tenant, the unsatisfactory state of land cultivation, and the poverty and vassalage of our agriculturists, we need not wonder that they are said to be “the worst fed, worst housed, and worst clothed peasantry in Europe;” this assertion has been iterated so often that it is probably right, I, however, have no means of judging; that the country presents such advantages as would, if rightly used, make the population comfortable I do know, and that is what I have to do with.

A people cannot be contented or prosperous while afflicted with such great evils of landlordism as I have stated in the foregoing part of this work, to say nothing of the effects of so many hundred years of English misrule.

The want of knowledge which the writers for English journals show about Irish affairs, is a subject of astonishment to us, we must regret that they have not taken the trouble to make themselves acquainted with facts; statements not founded on truth are likely to produce evil,—in our case they do,—they irritate the Irish against the English, and they mislead the English with respect to the Irish.

For example—the *Weekly Times*, a London penny paper (January 26th, 1868), has these

passages:—"The great bulk of the Irish people who sympathise with Fenianism are ignorant and miserable to an extent of which English people can scarcely form an idea."

"Englishmen who only know Irish gentlemen, or an occasional good-humoured labourer engaged in rough work, have no conception of the uncivilized condition of millions of the Irish people in their own country; they are centuries behind ourselves, if indeed at any time which history records our peasantry was in such a wretched plight."

"Ireland is a land of sedition and rags. It may not flatter Irish vanity to recognise, in plain terms, the fact of her deplorably barbarous condition."

These passages are taken from the leading article in the above-named extensively circulated paper.

It is above forty years since I first left my native country for England; I have resided fourteen years there, and have had fair opportunities for judging of the civilization of that country; I have also been in thirty of the thirty-two counties of Ireland,—in fact for forty years I have been travelling more or less through Ireland, a good deal on foot, often late at night, through some of the wildest and thinnest populated districts; sometimes where not a word of English was spoken by the greater part of the population, and when benighted or otherwise obliged to seek a night's shelter in these places, I have, in perfect confidence, often sought

it in the cabin of the Irish peasant, have been granted it most kindly, and I have slept in these humble abodes with as great a feeling of security as if I lay in the finest hotel, and have never been treated otherwise than with courtesy and good nature,—I can testify from this experience that I found none of that rudeness and grossness of conduct which I found in England.

I have experienced obliging civility in those parts where there were no English or Scotch settlers; I cannot say the same of the Plantation districts, but even there I found the peasantry passably civil; the actual rudeness was shewn by those who were far above them in social position. From my own experience I can safely pronounce the statement respecting the barbarism of the Irish people a mere invention, and must doubt that the writer knew anything about the people of this country.

Does not this writer's statement, if true, tell badly against the results of English domination here? What have our English rulers been doing that they have left us centuries behind? for nearly two hundred years they have had complete dominion over us, they passed penal laws, they enacted our expulsion from our own soil, they transported the Irish by shiploads to be West Indian slaves, they sent cargoes of our females to gratify the licentiousness of English planters, they deprived us of the means of getting property, of getting education, of

getting social position ; these, and much more have our English rulers done. Were these things done to civilize us? Who are the barbarians? We are poor, we are discontented, but we are not barbarians.

"I have had a great deal to do with the people, and I never met anywhere a more orderly, peaceable, or industrious population."—*Rev. Mr. Darcy's Evidence before the House of Commons.*

Turning from the penny paper to the *Times*. The statements in which this great journal indulges respecting Irish matters are as destitute of accuracy as assertions well can be ; and, to make the matter worse, they are characterized by a bitterness of hostility against the Irish nation which one finds difficult to explain otherwise than by assuming a madness on the subject of Ireland, or a covert purpose which is yet to be revealed. Her priesthood are, according to this organ, "a band of surpliced ruffians"; the people, "a nation of assassins"; Ireland, "the mother of assassins." One could smile at the mendaciousness of such statements were it not that so skilfully conducted a paper as this, the leading English journal, must have an object in so belying our country. Thus it presents the sad picture of writers of undoubted ability prostituting their powers for the base purpose of libelling, in the most atrocious manner, a whole nation.

Another journal whose articles respecting Ire-

land are equally rancorous with those of the *Times*, is the *Saturday Review*. On the 28th November, 1863, that periodical had the following terrible paragraph in reference to Irish emigration : — “ The departing demons of assassination. So complete is the rush of departing marauders, whose lives were profitably occupied in shooting Protestants from behind a hedge, that silence reigns over the vast solitude of Ireland.”

What a pity it is that the writer of the above, when he ascended into the regions of pure imagination, did not invent something original in the way of an accusation. The *Times* has already used the term assassination so often that it might have been left as the sole property of that paper. With the *Saturday Review* this baseless calumny even wants the poor merit of originality.

That the entire statement is a fabrication, is easily shown from internal evidence.

Marauders are persons who roam about in quest of plunder. Persons who are leaving their own country, even if flying from justice, are not, therefore, marauders.

How could the *Saturday Review* writer have known that the millions of Irish people who were emigrating had occupied their lives in “ profitably shooting Protestants from behind a hedge ? ” What hedge ? In what part of Ireland is that verdant screen growing ? and who, except

a writer of fiction, ever conceived a complete rush of a nation's population while silence reigns? I have seen many batches of emigrants—"the departing demons of assassination" of the *Saturday Review*,—and know that during this "rush" from their native land the effect was the reverse of silence. Had the writer of this very censurable passage witnessed these scenes, if he had the feelings of a man, he would assuredly have felt the deepest commiseration for the agony—loud and thrilling in its manifestation—which was displayed. That our people have rushed from Ireland, is too true; but that they are assassins, marauders, or that they shoot Protestants from "behind a hedge," or, lastly, that even now Ireland is one vast solitude, are, thank God, baseless fabrications.

Painful as it is to me to have to condemn, in such strong language, the statements of the writers I have quoted from, it is with a deeper sense of pain, and a profound feeling of humiliation that I turn to the pamphlet of an Irish peer, who has needlessly and unjustly joined his testimony to that of the English calumniators of his country. This has been done by Lord Lifford, in his letter to Isaac Butt, Esq., Q.C., entitled, "A Plea for Irish Land-lords."

Mr. Butt proposed, as a plan to get over the disadvantages under which the land tillers are placed, as tenants at will, that land-lords should

be obliged to lease farms at properly-estimated rents for a term of sixty-three years. This proposal of Mr. Butt's, Lord Lifford stigmatises as subversive of the rights of property. To avoid an irrelevant topic, I will not consider Mr. Butt's plan ; what I have to do with is his lordship's way of meeting it. The effect of the plan would be to stop arbitrary evictions, and the power which the land-lord possesses of raising rents at pleasure. That these checks on land-lords' powers are needed, no one who is not blinded by self-interest can doubt ; but I may suppose that the plan is unreasonable, is an unnecessary interference with land-lords' rights. Had Lord Lifford said so, and proved his assertion, he would have done right ; but not only has he not done so, but he has unnecessarily insulted a gentleman of eminent ability, and in so doing has used language which is grossly offensive to every native of Ireland. I quote his words :—“ Irish contempt of law and of the rights of property are paramount in the proposal of the Irish lawyer.”

There is no one who knows Ireland, much less an Irishman, who must not feel indignant at this fabrication. To assert that all the people of Ireland, or even the major part of them, are contemners of law and of the rights of property, is so monstrous that one must charitably suppose his lordship could not have understood the import of his own

words ; certain I am that he cannot believe what they imply. What a pity that he has thus, I must suppose inadvertently, added his testimony to the British vituperation of his country. An Irish gentleman, an Irish representative peer thus falsely libelling his native land, is a fact at which all rightly-constituted minds must feel shocked, and which I hope the better sense of his lordship has, when his anger subsided, caused him to regret.

But the question may be asked, What is the object of the English Press in thus persistently calumniating Ireland and the Irish? Why this delight at “silence again reigning in the vast solitude of Ireland?” Is it caused by a wish to carry out now the system of Elizabeth, James, Cromwell, and William III.? namely, to drive the Irish out of the country altogether, and occupy the fertile plains, the smiling valleys, the length and breadth of this glorious island, the last home of the noble Celts. Or is it merely to apologise to the civilized world for the injustice England has inflicted on us? We have the sympathy of Europe and of America. A portion of the English press has been attempting to write us down. No lie has been too audacious, no charge too scandalous for this purpose. If these calumniators can succeed in their nefarious purpose, if they can persuade the intelligent people of other nations that the Irish are a nation of assassins and marauders, that

Ireland is the mother of assassins, whose people amuse themselves behind some mythic hedge shooting fabled Protestants, we would be abhorred by the nations; and then some modern Cromwell could make Ireland one vast solitude, and thank heaven for "a crowning mercy," as "Old Noll" did after he had been for five days butchering the people of Drogheda in cold blood. Such are the ideas which these abusive tirades are calculated to engender in Irish minds.

England is distinguished among nations for benevolence. Not only does she act kindly to the halt, the lame, and the blind among her own people, but she is a sort of political Samaritan to suffering nations. "Enslaved Greece," "oppressed Poland," "downtrodden Italy," have become stereotyped sentences in English newspapers. "Freedom to oppressed nationalities," has been trumpeted forth all over the world, and no doubt a very excellent blast it made; it served to encourage disaffection against misrule, and gave "a moral support" to the Continental nations who were struggling by force to gain freedom.

This encouragement to rebellion and to revolution (on the Continent only) has, however, been suddenly discovered by Lord Viscount Stanley to be "talking unadvisedly about the sacred cause of nationality;" this very diplomatic sentiment having been elicited by the fact of English news-

papers being read in Ireland ; and, deplorable result, very many of the Irish people imagining they might think about the sacred cause of their own nationality—a result, of course, never contemplated by the hot advocates of freedom for the Continental people—strictly limited to them.

“ Thus self-pleased still, the same dishonouring chain
She binds in Ireland, she would break in Spain ;
While praised at distance, but at home forbid,
Rebels in Cork are patriots at Madrid.”

Moore.

As the opponents of Continental rebellions might naturally be expected to turn round on these preachers of sedition, and tell them to look to Ireland and set it right, if it were only for the sake of example and the good of England’s character, there must be a reply to such an appeal ; that reply is, What can we do ? All the Irish are assassins—would you believe it ? They send out bands of marauders to catch poor innocent Protestants, and when they have caught a large number, they assemble at the shooting ground, and, just as we used to set the dog Billy in a pit to see could he kill a hundred rats in ten minutes, they fire at the Protestants from behind a hedge, each Irishman being allowed so many shots, and he who succeeds in bringing down the largest number is declared the victor at this dreadful immolation.

So profitable is this found that millions join in it, and then they rush in silence out of the country !

This explanation must satisfy all upbraiders; a nation of assassins and marauders that can thus occupy itself in shooting Protestants, is only fit for what it gets from England.

Even at the mischievous ability of stating falsehoods, people progress by practice. In old time the current English lie of the day was that Irishmen had tails, and lived on horse-flesh; our modern writers of political fictions far surpass the English writers of Queen Elizabeth's days.

I appeal to the calm reflection of the thinking part of the people of England against the slanders which the aristocratic press of England publishes against my country. Were we the marauders, the assassins, the contemners of law and of the rights of property we are stated to be; if we employed our time in shooting Protestants from behind a hedge, what are the twenty or thirty thousand soldiers in Ireland about? What are the twelve thousand armed and disciplined constables about? What is England about, that these horrors are not prevented? Who are the Protestants we have shot? Where were they shot? When were they shot? Were the assassins not brought to justice? Is not the whole a batch of brutal lies?

I appeal to the reformers of England for their aid in the endeavour to get our island for ourselves, for their aid to raise a deserving people from their present vassalage. The heart of a trueborn Eng-

lishman responds to the call for freedom. The freedom I seek for Ireland is a just, a peaceful, and a noble revolution. English reformers, aid us with all your power.

CHAPTER IX.

BY WHAT RIGHT DO THE LAND-LORDS HOLD IRELAND ?

"Force first made conquest, and that conquest law."—POPE.

A STORY is told of a Scottish king who hinted to his nobles that he purposed making an inquiry into the titles to their estates ; those belted warriors cut the proposed inquiry short, for, drawing their swords, they one and all exclaimed, "by these we won our lands, and by these we mean to keep them."

No inquiry followed.

This story recalls the commencement of the sword chant of Thorstein Raudi :—

" 'Tis not the gray hawk's flight o'er mountain and mere ;
 'Tis not the fleet hound's course when tracking the deer ;
 'Tis not the light hoof-print of black steed or gray,
 Though sweltering it gallop a long summer's day,
 Which mete out the lordships I challenge as mine ;
 Ha ! ha ! 'tis the good brand I clutch in my strong hand,
 That can their broad marches and numbers define.

Landgiver ! I kiss thee."

MOTHERWELL.

The sword—violence—is the original title-deed by which lands are held in most countries ; the old land-winners went by

“The good old rule, the simple plan,
That he should take who has the power,
And he should keep who can.”

Except in the case of William Penn, who purchased Pennsylvania from the original inhabitants, I cannot remember any foreign incomers who did not seize the lands of the natives by force, or cheat them out of their property by trickery.

Still, though force or fraud is the original basis of possession, conquest or duplicity is not a title suited for a peaceful state of civilization.

If the land-lord were to proclaim the doctrine of force, if his motto were “Might constitutes right,” he would invite an agrarian war ; and even were the insurgents successful, their title would be as invalid as that of those they expelled. The blood-stained authority of the sword will not be accepted by civilized society.

Although violence and fraud were the means by which the people of Ireland lost their lands (as well as the people of most other countries), a better title, one founded on reason and justice, has been attempted to be made out by political philosophers.

That extremely able writer, Archdeacon Paley, has, in his “Moral Philosophy,” endeavoured to

prove that landlordism, even such landlordism as we have in Ireland, is the best possible state of things—is the will of God.—*Book iii. chap. 1.*

But this solution, though very suitable for a well-to-do ecclesiastic, is not philosophic, hence it was necessary that another reason should be found. Paley commences with the following very remarkable illustration :—

“ If a man saw in a field of corn a flock of pigeons, all of whom, save one, were engaged, not in choosing for themselves the best food, but the worst, and reserving the best for that single pigeon, the weakest and, perhaps, worst of the flock ; and if, while that single pigeon was devouring or wasting at pleasure, he should see, when another hungry and hardy pigeon touched a grain of the hoard, all the other pigeons fly on the intruder and peck it to death, he would see nothing more than what is practised every day among men. In civilized society ninety-nine persons toil to find superfluities for one, sometimes the least deserving of his species, getting for themselves only the worst and smallest share, and though quietly looking on while they see the fruits of their labour spoilt or spent by that one or his minions, joining to hang a man whose necessities may have led him to take the smallest particle from the general hoard so unequally distributed.”—*Paley's Moral Phil., b. iii.*

This philosopher had previously given another illustration of the land monopoly subject. He supposes several persons to land on a desert island, on which is an apple-tree in full bearing ; all the new comers want apples, and if the tree has plenty for all of them, there is no necessity for

a lord or proprietor over it; but if the fruit be "not enough for all," then that scarcity shows clearly "that God intended the tree to be given to one or a few individuals." So far Paley.

The effect of landlordism over the apple-tree would be to allow a superabundance to the tree owner, and to leave the outsiders only the parings. A similar result is stated to arise in the instance of the pigeons,—a result which Paley truly pronounces to be apparently absurd and unnatural,—we must look for a better plan than Paley's.

The practical common sense of mankind has led to the adoption of methods very different from landlordism ; for instance, if the crew of a vessel at sea find provisions running short, they do not collect the whole stock, deposit it in the captain's cabin, empower him to gorge himself, and to give them whatever scanty allowance or refuse he may choose to allow from the superabundance ; neither, if water was scarce on board, would the crew collect what little remained, give it to the captain to wallow in, if he thought proper, and leave themselves perishing of thirst. Such a mode of dealing would not do even for the marines. Yet, unnatural and absurd as it is, Paley recommends it to us landlubbers.

As the Archdeacon has given an illustration from a number of persons landing on a productive but uninhabited island,—such as Ireland is hoped

to be in a few years by some writers for the aristocratic English journals, when silence shall reign in "the vast solitude of Ireland," and not even one Paddy be left, like Thomas Campbell's *Last Man*, to shout to the sun, and shake the sere leaves from the wood with ever so many feet of tall talk. I in like manner shall suppose the mythic period when, as the aristocratic *Times* has said—"The Celt shall be gone with a vengeance." Let us suppose Ireland depopulated, and England again reduced to its pristine barbarism ; let us suppose that the civilized New Zealander has finished his poetic sketch of the ruins of St. Paul's, with the broken arch of London Bridge in the foreground, and the surrounding solitude animated by a characteristic group of a family of bare breeched Britishers swallowing their dinners *al fresco*. This valuable sketch completed, the Antipodean rambler and his friends order their balloons and set off on a cloud-companionship trip

"To the west, to the west, to the land of the free," where Liberty reigns supreme, because there is nobody to hinder her.

Arrived at the last abode of the extirpated Celt, they descend, and, charmed with "the vast solitude," they determine to form a settlement, and send back their balloons—by the overland route, of course,—with orders for their wives and children to join them (and in a few cases

their sweethearts with their marriage certificates from the government registrar in blank ready for filling in), so that they may duly settle down in this newly-discovered, totally-depopulated island.

Now comes the land question. Two courses we will assume are open to them. To make "one or a few individuals"—I use Paley's words—owners of the whole island, just as a few individuals own the island now—to make Irish land-lords in short,—What would be the result?

Not a house could be built, not a tent could be set up, not a seed could be put into the ground, not a trout could be hooked, not a hare could be snared, not a snipe shot, nothing over which the monopolists had been thus foolishly given a power could be meddled with, unless the monopolists gave leave,—that is, unless they were paid for granting permission; in fact the many would be the slaves of the few land-lords; they would have so many *tiernas* in the Irish language (*tyrannus*, Latin), land tyrants in plain English. That would be a bad course.

But if, in addition to the complete possession which these foolish New Zealanders had given to the land-lords, they had also granted them liberty to quit the country, and to reside at the other side of the globe, or, it may be, in the moon—Edgar Poe's imaginary trip will, I dare say, be a realised fact by that time—to become, in short, what we

have so numerous, absentee land-lords, draining the country of millions of hard cash annually ; then, indeed, the New Zealanders would have made a pretty mess of it, and would soon come to be as badly off as we are now ; and they would be glad to fly from poor old Ireland to any retreat, even at the farthest corner of the earth, to escape from Irish landlordism.

If the owners of the island were not New Zealanders at all, but so many Caffres, or, mayhap, Australian aborigines, the case would be still worse.

And if these Caffres or other foreigners had placed one of their own people over the inhabitants, some man or some woman of foreign breed to reign over them, the case would be worse still.

And if that one who reigned over them resided in Caffre land or in Australia, the case would be still worse and worse.

With absentee land-lords, and an absentee monarch, is it reasonable to expect that these unfortunate poor people would be contented with their lot, or loyal towards their government ?

The innocent-minded English people wonder we are not perfectly contented. If they were ruled over by the Emperor of France ; if their country was owned by French people ; if most of these French land owners lived in France and did nothing to benefit England, although they drained some millions of pounds every year out of England

as rent ; if the Emperor of France filled England with Romish priests, and, further, if these priests were a meddling lot, setting up home missions for converting the Protestants from the “blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits” of Protestantism ; if these were the conditions of the English people, would they not be discontented ?

Such is the way with us in Ireland.

The other course which the new comers might pursue is very simple. They could appoint “one or more individuals” (the ungrammatical sentence is Paley’s, not mine) to attend to the land : so many land commissioners—just as they might appoint town commissioners, harbour commissioners, or commissioners for any other public object ;—make them responsible for the land management, and pay them for their trouble, but keep the island for themselves, and put the profits into a common fund—the consolidated fund of the future Gladstone or Disraeli of the newly-resuscitated land of Erin.

I ask the reader which course does he think would it be best for the new comers to adopt ? We have tried the first one for a long time, and our misery shows its effects. I will further on explain how the other course could be realized peaceably and justly.

Returning from this fanciful digression to our author Paley. He admits that “to explain the

right of property in land consistent with the law of nature, is no easy task ;” and he gives us to understand that the law of nature is, that the land is the common property of all ; “ for,” he inquires, “ as the land was once common to all, by what right could any part of it be taken by one person, to the exclusion of all others ?”

Or in other words, **BY WHAT RIGHT DO THE LAND-LORDS HOLD IRELAND ?**

After Paley has examined the reasons usually assigned, and very properly rejected them, he concludes truthfully—

“ The real foundation of the right is the law of the land.”

The expediency of the law or its defectiveness does not affect the right. So long as the law fixes the right, so long does the right exist, and no longer ; and whatever way the right is by law established, in that way only is the right existent. In one country an estate may by law go to the eldest son ; in another it may be divided equally among the children. Each mode is right, for law is the only foundation of landed property.

Hence we conclude that any legalized mode is equally right according to Paley ; and that those who speak of the rights of property as opposed to any proposed legal settlement of the land question, have no support in the archdeacon’s philosophy ; the original or the abstract right is against them.

According to him, any way by which the use of the earth is secured to man is consistent with the will of God, or is "right."

So far Paley. His work is an English classic; it is the text-book at our University.

Landlordism is a legalized monopoly, maintained by law for the advantage of the land-lords against the interests of the nation.

Paley's works hold a very high character, yet on the subject of property in land he has not displayed those philosophical powers which his admirers attribute to him; his case of the pigeons places landlordism in a position which he admits to be apparently absurd and unnatural; from this absurd position he does not extricate it by his assertion that the system is based on the law of the land, for that is merely declaring that an absurd institution is supported by an absurd law; neither does he extricate it from the absurd and unnatural position by stating that, by means of landlordism, the fruits of the earth are preserved to maturity; for, as a philosopher, he had to show what the present land system is, to point out its advantages and disadvantages, and to suggest a plan by which the utmost possible benefits could be got from the land, and these benefits be extended to the largest possible number of people. As he has treated the subject he has appeared to philosophise, but he has actually only narrated; we know that it is

absurd and unnatural to have the masses of mankind (or pigeons) labouring to support a few incomplete idleness and in great wealth; we know that under the law of the land this is done, and we know that, as things are, the fruits of the earth are preserved to maturity—not, however, by landlordism,—but we know also that this absurd system is not sound in philosophy or just in practice. Paley has not investigated the land-lord subject as a philosopher who should inquire not merely into what is, but for the best way that is possible.

These remarks apply to what Paley has said in his third book of Moral Phil., but in the 11th chap. of his fourth book, same work, he makes a remark or two, by which he seems not to have understood the land question at all,—one is :

“ Property in land is the power to use it,” Whereas the fact is that property in land is the power of preventing others from using it, or it is a monopoly.

Again he says :—

“ It matters not to the public who may possess the power over the soil if it be only properly cultivated.”

Let us suppose that the Emperor of France possessed a land-lord’s power over all Ireland, that he planted a host of French or Belgian tillers here, that every rood of Ireland was cultivated like a garden, and that, the tillers being paid,

every portion of the fruits of the earth, when arrived at maturity, was transferred, possibly to Algeria, to feed the famishing Arabs. Would this arrangement be a matter of no consequence to us, the Irish public?

The fact is that Paley, like Whateley, has a plausible way of expressing himself; but in none of his writings has he shown himself a philosopher, or better than a dexterous supporter of the opinions of the powers that be by a cunningly entangled sophistry.

Our lands are in some respects as if the Emperor of France owned Ireland. The greater part of this island being the property of absentees, and many of the land-lords who rank as resident being anti-Irish in their proclivities, we might just as well be paying our rents to Napoleon III. as to our present land owners; indeed, if he were our land-lord, it would probably be much better for us. The present Emperor, with all his shortcomings, has shown great public spirit, his feelings are not against the people of his country, he is not the man of the mountain seated on the neck of unfortunate Sinbad, and crushing his victim to the earth with the burden of his oppression. We send our rents, that is the produce of our soil, to those who repay us with insult and contempt. A system so utterly indefensible calls imperatively for a change.

Lord Lifford, in his letter to Isaac Butt, advo-

cates land-lords' rights as being "the universally recognized rights of property;" but he forgets that the land is by strict right national property, that land-lords' rights are only legal rights, and that it is the duty of a wise legislator to take away these rights if they are injurious to the people.

CHAPTER X.

WHAT DOES IRELAND PAY FOR LANDLORDISM?

"Reason dumfounded gives up the dispute,
And before the stupendous extortion stands mute."

MOORE.

THE plan I have suggested for managing the lands by commissioners responsible to the government, or, in other words, to the country; these land guardians to be paid good salaries if necessary, and to be properly checked to prevent jobbery,—this plan could not be costly. All the lands, whether the highly rented ones in towns or the lower rented ones in the country, could be managed for about one million a-year at the utmost.

What are we paying for the present system of land-lord mismanagement?

The first item is rent: rent varies from a few shillings to several hundred pounds an acre; the low price is paid for coarse mountain land, from which but little produce is got; the high price is paid for land in towns, from which there is no produce at all,—a fact worthy of remembrance, as the doctrine of some political economists is that rent is the surplus after the farmer is paid for his time, labour, and capital. In the case of towns ground rents are paid for a monopoly and nothing else; in some very favourable places for business the land rents in towns amount to thousands an acre. Even at a short distance from Belfast (half-a-mile) three and a-half acres of land were lately sold for £3,210; this at five per cent.—or twenty years' purchase—is nearly £50 a-year per acre. This was for land for building purposes, outside the town. What must rent be for the best positions in Belfast?

I have no means of accurately ascertaining the amount of money paid to the owners of Ireland, but remembering that the island is twenty-one millions of acres in extent, forty or fifty millions a-year is, I think, a very moderate calculation—a heavy sum to pay for landlordism. Besides the direct money incomes of our owners there are political powers, church patronage, the game, the fish, &c.,—these must be worth a great deal. On every estate there is a residence in a good demesne,

generally inhabited by agents, when the owners are absentees. These demesnes are so much cost to us ; they are residences in addition to rentals, and are additional emoluments for the landlords. We must not forget that all this fearfully heavy charge for land management by landlords is not even spent in Ireland ; some millions of rents are paid to absentees. So far as we are concerned we might as well every year pitch millions of money into the ocean.

Land-lords are generally careful to make money by any means within their power. The mines of Ireland are thus made a source of large additional income.

At Youghal the very sand on the sea shore has to be paid for. Owing to peculiar circumstances, access to the sea shore can be cut off by means of an iron gate ; here a man is posted, who gets money for every load of sand that passes. The Duke of Devonshire—an absentee—owns miles upon miles of that part of Ireland ; he owns many towns there, yet the miserable cottier who wants a load of sand to mix with sea-weed, that thereby he may grow a crop of potatoes for his family, this poor creature has to pay to England's proud duke one halfpenny for an ass load of sea sand,—sand which is lying in superabundance on the strand, but which the duke has adroitly managed to appropriate, and so squeeze from penury a miserable mite. One of

England's noble dukes selling ha'p'orths of sand!

Not far from the town where I am now writing, a predecessor of one of Ireland's best land-lords had the shameful meanness to put bailiffs on the strand to exact fourpence from each person who took a can and a spoon to collect cockles; in case a rake was used for gathering the bivalves, eight pence were exacted. These sums were charged every time the cockle-pickers went to collect. This titled landlord was entitled "the cockle lord." I need hardly say that the present excellent proprietor does not exact cockle-rent.

So much for the positive pay our landlords get for such land management as they give us; let us now consider the negative side of this question.

Ireland was formerly called the wooded island; now it is lamentably bare of timber. I have in a previous chapter mentioned, from my own observation, how much this island requires to be planted. The able writer of "Ireland, her present Condition, its Cause, and its Remedies," thus mentions this subject:—

(P. 12.) "Large material benefit would arise to Ireland by including planting, and fencing preparatory to it, among the objects of the Land Improvement Act. There are thousands of acres fit for no other purpose, which, if planted, would in a few years increase in value a hundred-fold, especially as the demand for railway sleepers and telegraph poles must greatly enhance the price of native larch,

which is superior to any imported timber for these purposes. Plantations making but a slow return, the repayment of loans for this purpose might take the form of a deferred annuity ; for instance, that no repayments should be required for the first ten years, and then increasing in amount every five years till paid off ; the timber in the mean time forming an ample security."—*Jonathan Pim, M.P.*

This is an excellent passage. I have already mentioned that our want of woods is owing to the land-lords. They sold the timber, and did not plant. Our losses from want of timber crops are enormous.

North of Dundalk is a range of mountains, which extend many miles every way ; these are dreary, naked, profitless, untimbered ; Why not wooded ? The reply is, landlordism.

Not only do we lose the money value of the timber crops that might be grown on our lands now lying worthless, but we also lose the benefits of the employment which the fencing and planting the lands would give to the people. The attending to the crop after it was planted ; felling the timber, conveying it for sale, and disposing of it, would all be sources of employment. The waste timber, which could be used for firing, would be also of use and be a profit.

Had we timber, our iron mines at Arigna could be worked again ; but timber is not a land-lord's crop.

But of more value than all is the living crop of human beings that we are losing through landlordism. The very flower of our population is emigrating at the rate of two hundred thousand a-year.

That such enormous cost as we are at for landlordism, that so many millions as we pay each year to absentees, that so large an extent of Ireland lying waste in consequence of land-lords not planting, and our population flying from their beloved island, that these should cause discontent and poverty is but natural ; the English Government has forced land-lords and land-laws on us, behold the consequences,—we are miserable—we are discontented ; and no wonder that the spirit of rebellion broods over this ill-used island when that Government supports this monster evil of landlordism to the ruin of our country. That the Irish land-lords belong to a church which is alien to our country, and that they are imbued to a great extent with anti-Irish prejudices, is another embitterment of our lot.

We have seen Lord Lifford declaring that a contempt of law and of the rights of property is Irish, thus joining his Irish voice to the English howl against us ; that nobleman was not content with going so far, forgetful of the dogma which one of Lord Lifford's Irish contemners of law and property, Sheridan, puts into Mrs. Malaprop's

mouth, that “comparasins is oderus;” he couples his national slander of his country—he says he is an Irish gentleman!—with a bepraising of all Englishmen. His words are, “The principle of fair dealing and the respect for mutual rights inherent in every Englishman.” I respect Englishmen; I have been used very justly by many of them, and have found some as thorough scoundrels as could well be; this, however, is only my own experience; but has not Lord Lifford seen that there are policemen, magistrates, judges, jails, and hangmen in England? Are these mere Government decorations, things only for mere idle display? Are there not such crimes committed among the English, by the English, as picking pockets, swindling, forgery, arson, wife beating, rape, murder? the English papers overflow with accounts of such crimes; his favourite slanderers of Ireland, the *Times*, both daily and weekly, are full of them. Are these proofs of “the principle of fair dealing and the respect for mutual rights inherent *in every Englishman?*” Perhaps I am in error in supposing that Lord Lifford has taken his anti-Irish ideas from the *Times*; these ideas may be wholly out of his own brain,—perhaps so,—I give the benefit of the doubt to this “Irish gentleman.”

Ireland has produced men of genius in every department of refined civilization. Among the

painters and the sculptors of Europe, Ireland's artists hold a foremost rank ; Maclise from Cork, Hogan from the same city, Danby from the Co. Wexford, Mulready from the West of Ireland, Foley from Dublin, M'Dowell from Belfast, and many other talented artists are natives of Ireland, but they have all been obliged to emigrate. What Irish resident landlord has cherished the budding genius of Maclise, one of the best painters in Europe ? Or of Foley, as great a sculptor as the world can produce, I should have said the greatest living sculptor ? Or of M'Dowell, whose realizations of female loveliness have never been excelled ? I ask what great resident proprietor has encouraged the rising talent of our living artists ? out of their own land they had to seek for that encouragement which the owners of Ireland have not given. These owners are foreigners, and, judging by their acts, they care no more for Irish genius than they do for an Irish pig,—indeed they regard the pig more than the artist,—they encourage the production of pork, and neglect the producers of works of genius. Ireland produces men of genius ; they may perish for all the land-lords of Ireland care.

With the enormous amount of money which the land-lords of Ireland receive from us as rents, with the other great advantages which they have—owning, as they do, the whole of this noble island, a property which is worth to them one thousand

millions of hard cash. With this vast property and their great incomes we might reasonably expect that they would do all that would be required for the good of this island—for their own property—out of their own pay, that is, out of their rents. Silly idea! to expect that the men who own Ireland, and who receive such enormous sums of our money, would do anything of the kind.

Ireland wants a wholesale system of draining. Many lakes could be lowered, and their levels regulated. Some lakes that now cover hundreds of acres of what would, if drained, be fertile land, are capable of thorough draining. The banks of the Shannon and other rivers are, in many parts, worthless bogs. I have stood on an eminence below Athlone, and seen nothing but bog; as far as the eye could reach, to the utmost horizon it was bog; a dreary brown waste for many miles on every side—all reclaimable land. Our owners will not spend the money; they waste their pay in riotous debauchery, or some other way different from that which their duty requires. Land-lords call on Government to do what they should do themselves.

As owners of Ireland, they should make the roads, bridges, harbours, lighthouses, piers, quays, and other public works. They should keep them in repair, and provide our poor fishermen with asylum harbours, for want of which so many lives

are lost; but no, not so much as a lifeboat will they give. The Dundalk lifeboat, to the disgrace of the land owners, was paid for by the subscriptions of some school children in England! Grateful as we must ever feel for this kind gift, we must also feel shame for our land-lords in not procuring the boat out of their many thousands of pounds. No! they left it to be provided out of the pennies of school children!

Our roadways were formerly turnpiked, our market towns subject to tolls, our harbours and lighthouses are still subject to exactions. Every harbour ought to be free; there should be no charge for lighthouses; the owners of Ireland should supply and maintain these necessary structures.

Captains of ships keep their vessels out in open sea off a harbour during severe weather, when they do not want to go into the port on business; this is done to escape harbour dues, to the manifest danger of shipwreck, and sometimes shipwreck is the consequence. A small box cannot be got from Liverpool to Dundalk without harbour dues at each port. Our ports ought to be free as our highways; above all things ports should be free, and asylum harbours plentiful, so as to promote commerce and protect the lives of our brave seamen.

The miserable modes of access that farmers

have to their houses and farms—boreens, or loanings—are disgraceful ; these should be made into proper roadways, and in many districts tramways should be laid to facilitate the conveyance of fertilizers to the farms and the getting off the crops ; now every thing is done in a poor peddling way that causes great loss of time, and time is money everywhere except, one might think, in Ireland. The owners of Ireland should do these things out of the many millions of hard cash they get out of us. It is not fair that we should have to pay county cess, poor rates, and other dues for the purpose of defraying the cost of those works the owners of Ireland ought to execute.

CHAPTER XI.

FEUDALISM AND LANDLORDISM.

"All that was abominable to God and oppressive to man was common."
Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

As some persons do not understand the feudal system, I will explain it, for it is intimately connected with the land question.

The feudal system is essentially military ; under it society was divided into two classes—the fighting men or freemen, and the working men or slaves.

If a powerful military chief led a successful in-road against a nation,—as William of Normandy did against the English in 1066,—that chief would seize on the lands of the natives, and reduce the people to a state of slavery. As much of the lands thus violently wrested from the conquered people as the chief thought necessary he would reserve for himself, the rest he would divide among the principal men who formed part of the expedition as managers of the allotted lands, those managers to hold the lands at the will of the chief, or monarch, as we may call him.

The lands would be held on certain conditions, as loyalty or truth to the monarch, the keeping a specified number of fighting men equipped and disciplined, and giving their services to the monarch when required.

There were also other aids from these grantees, the estates were subject to fines, tallages, seisins, rents, reliefs, benevolences, escheats for future wardships; these were various ways in which the monarch managed to make money out of the holder and maintain his supremacy.

The estates were fees—that is, they were granted as pay—and the holders were feedatories or feudatories; the estates were, in effect, held as so many military districts, subject to have a fixed number of fighting men always ready, as well as to assist the monarch with money on certain

specified occasions. The owner of the estate held it only during the king's pleasure, just as the colonel of a regiment now holds his command.

At that time the Crown had no army; the feudatories and the free tenants on their estates were the national army.

As the monarch reserved for the general purposes of the crown a portion of the conquered territory, termed crown lands, so the feudatories reserved from the land granted to them by the monarch a part—the demesnes,—and partitioned off the remainder into so many farms, to be held by knights or by yeomen; these latter were freemen, who were to be armed, skilled in the use of their weapons, and ready to attend their chiefs (or land-lords) on occasions. Thus the country was converted into an immense military body, armed and disciplined, and bound to serve the monarch on pain of death for treason.

Meantime the land was worked either by the natives, who were in a state of bondage, or by slaves bought in the market; for in the feudal times men and women were sold just as we sell sheep now; and, remember, these were not blacks, but whites.

The head of the estate, the land-lord, built himself a strong castle; the subfeudatories or tenants had also strongholds. The serfs or slaves lived in hamlets or villages, collections of cabins incapable

of defence, hence these people were called villains. And as a degraded people will have certain mean vices peculiar to a state of degradation, these dwellers in villages had such faults ; thus a dweller in a village, that is to say, a villain, and a low unprincipled person, came to be identical. And as all the laborious work was done by these villains, and as all freemen were warriors, productive labour was held to be degrading, and warfare the only honourable occupation.

The feudatories who thus served the crown, and whose fee or pay was the land allotted to them, were of various ranks ; some were dukes (*Latin dux*, a chief person, commander, general) ; their power extended over large districts ; counts ruled counties; barons were over baronies. Among them they had the power to hear causes and administer justice (or injustice). Some of them possessed the power of life and death, and the beheading block was a fixture to the great feudal castles, almost as much as a drawbridge or a port-cullis.

The quick perceptive power of Byron, and possibly, too, his knowledge of the feudal times, is indicated in the following lines, referring to the feudal strongholds :—

“ Beneath these battlements, within those walls,
Power dwelt amid her passions ; in proud state
Each feudal chief upheld his armed halls,
Doing his fearless will.”

BYRON.

There was little or no check to the will of the chief or land-lord. Then, indeed, “he could do what he liked with his own,” undisturbed by any dread of the law, or any other opposition, so long as he satisfied the love of his followers for warfare and plunder, and he was sufficiently powerful to repel the attacks of his neighbours.

The feudal ages are by many thought to be the real good old times. Let us see what an eye-witness—one who lived in the early times of English feudalism,—the author of the Saxon Chronicle—says of this age of warlike nationality, twenty-one years after the feudal conquest of England in 1087 : “ There was little righteousness amongst any, the more men spake of rightful laws, the more lawlessly did they act. They raised oppressive taxes. All that was abominable to God and oppressive to men was common in William’s time.”

In 1135, that is sixty-nine years after William the Norman had conquered England, Stephen was made king ; he reigned for nineteen years, thus extending the feudal age of England to eighty-eight years, or only twelve years short of a century.

“ When King Stephen came to England, he held an assembly at Oxford ; and there he seized Roger bishop of Salisbury, and Alexander bishop of Lincoln, and Roger the chancellor, his nephew, and he kept them all in prison

till they gave up their castles. When the traitors perceived that he was a mild man, and a soft, and a good, and that he did not enforce justice, they did all wonder. They had done homage to him, and sworn oaths, but they no faith kept ; all became forsown, and broke their allegiance, for every rich man built his castles, and defended them against him, and they filled the land full of castles. They greatly oppressed the wretched people by making them work at these castles, and when the castles were finished they filled them with devils and evil men. Then they took those whom they suspected to have any goods, by night and by day, seizing both men and women, and they put them in prison for their gold and silver, and tortured them with pains unspeakable, for never were any martyrs tormented as these were. They hung some up by their feet, and smoked them with foul smoke ; some by their thumbs, or by the head, and they hung burning things on their feet. They put a knotted string about their heads, and twisted it till it went into the brain. They put them into dungeons wherein were adders and snakes and toads, and thus wore them out. Some they put into a crucet-house, that is, into a chest that was short and narrow, and not deep, and they put sharp stones in it, and crushed the man therein so that they broke all his limbs. There were hateful and grim things called Sachentegees in many of the castles, and which two or three men had enough to do to carry. The Sachentege was made thus : it was fastened to a beam, having a sharp iron to go round a man's throat and neck, so that he might no ways sit, nor lie, nor sleep, but that he must bear all the iron. Many thousands they exhausted with hunger. I cannot and I may not tell of all the wounds, and all the tortures that they inflicted upon the wretched men of this land ; and this state of things lasted the nineteen years that Stephen was king, and ever grew

worse and worse. They were continually levying an exaction from the towns, which they called Tenserie,* and when the miserable inhabitants had no more to give, then plundered they, and burnt all the towns, so that well mightest thou walk a whole day's journey nor ever shouldest thou find a man seated in a town, or its lands tilled.

" Then was corn dear, and flesh, and cheese, and butter, for there was none in the land—wretched men starved with hunger—some lived on alms who had been erewhile rich : some fled the country—never was there more misery, and never acted heathens worse than these. At length they spared neither church or churchyard, but they took all that was valuable therein, and then burned the church and all together. Neither did they spare the lands of bishops, nor of abbats, nor of priests ; but they robbed the monks and the clergy, and every man plundered his neighbour as much as he could. If two or three men came riding to a town, all the township fled before them, and thought that they were robbers. The bishops and clergy were ever cursing them, but this to them was nothing, for they were all accursed, and forsaken, and reprobate."—*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

So you see those feudal nobles, from whom the proudest of England's aristocrats boast of being descended, were no better than a lot of unprincipled marauders ; it would be more creditable to the English aristocracy if they were descended from industrious tradesmen.

The following extract is from Jonathan Pim's

* A payment to the superior lord for protection.

“Condition and Prospects of Ireland.” Dublin,
1848 :—

(P. 5.) “The Norman adventurers exhibited in Ireland the same daring spirit, the same military prowess, the same lust of power, the same cruelty and disregard of the rights of others which the unfortunate Saxons had already experienced.”

The quotations from the Saxon Chronicle relate to the first century of the much-admired feudal ages. Those who wish to know how the system worked at a later period will learn a good deal from Scott’s novel of *Ivanhoe*, or, indeed, from almost any work that relates to the period extending from William of Normandy to Henry VII. This monarch broke up feudalism, and with that system slavery in England and Ireland appears to have been terminated, but when this actually took place is not known.

That black slaves might be sold according to the British law so late as one hundred years back, the following advertisement may be taken as proof: it is from the *Dublin Mercury* of August 18th, 1768 :—

“A neat, beautiful, black, Negro girl brought from Carolina, aged eleven or twelve years, who understands and speaks English; very fit to wait on a lady; to be disposed of. Application to be made to James Carolan, in Carrickmacross, or to Mr. Gavan, in Bridge-street, Dublin.”

This advertisement relates to a negro, but Irish

people were sent for slaves to work on the West Indian plantations, and to supply women for the lustful use of the West India planters during Cromwell's days, two hundred years back.

Feudalism had radical evils that ensured its destruction ; these evils were—by arming all freemen, and not providing a counterbalancing check, the country was given up to anarchy. The history of the feudal ages is one of domestic broils, of rebellion, of falsehood, of treachery, of bloodshed and cruelty.

By making the use of arms the business of freemen, and honest industry the business of slaves, a false splendour was diffused over the pernicious, or at the best, less useful occupation of arms, and the more useful occupation of steady productive industry was degraded—an error which has been transmitted to our own days.

The fearful bloody days of feudalism are past, but some think that the present tenures of fee-simple to lands are feudal tenures. The landlords generally hold their lands in England as feudal grants, but they have adroitly managed to make them free of feudal dues ; they do not support the army, nor pay a year's income on succeeding to an estate, nor the other exactions to which lands were subject; above all, they have converted estates held at will into properties with unlimited tenure ; in fact they have changed the feefs, subject to

many special tributes, into allodial lands free of them.

In Ireland numerous confiscations have rendered the modes of tenure rather perplexing, but as Ireland has been nearly wholly confiscated by Elizabeth, James, Cromwell, and William III.; and as all those who received those lands got them subject to a rent to the Crown—very moderate certainly, but which, trifling as it is, they have contrived to get rid of; even in this we see they have escaped from the responsibilities attached to their properties, and they have also not complied with the condition of placing good, substantial yeomen, holding large farms, on good leases at reasonable rents. As respects these holders of Irish lands, the error the various governments made is in not appointing proper officials, say commissioners of the Crown lands, to see that these grantees paid their crown rents, and fulfilled the other proper conditions connected with their holdings. Be this as it may, the owners of Ireland claim Ireland in *toto*, and cannot be expected to give up rights established by laws, although these laws have been made by themselves, without compensation. I say this, not as admitting their right in the abstract, but as suggesting a fair, peaceable settlement of the land question.

Before quitting the subject of feudalism I may mention that of burghs or fortified towns. I have

stated that villages and hamlets were the abodes of the slaves (the labourers); these were not fortified, neither had the labourers the privilege of carrying any weapon beyond a staff. There were, however, towns in which merchants and manufacturers lived, and to which the monarchs granted charters of incorporation; these formed independent associations, they walled their towns, formed themselves into bodies of fighting men, trained and disciplined, for the purpose of defending themselves against marauders, they owned the land on which stood the town, and also to a certain range outside; these were holders immediately under the Crown, and naturally served the Crown in two ways—as armed bodies to assist the monarch against his turbulent feudatories, and as monied men to aid the Crown with cash. These incorporated bodies helped much to free the slaves; any one who could get the freedom of a city or a borough, that is of an incorporated or chartered association, was entitled to all the protection his associates could give, and as these associates were workers—not mere fighters, with the false pride and lazy abhorrence of good, honest labour which feudalism engendered in the fighting class,—these communities flourished and were the beloved of royalty.

Still, as in the case of feudatories, there was no counterpoise; as society changed, as the monarch

gradually set up a standing army, as the owners of the soil merged their army character into that of mere land holders, and their holdings became independent of the monarch, as peace became the established order, and land dealing became general ; the corporations began to part with their lands, jobbing became universal, the corporate property was sold or swindled away, and now nearly all the lands of towns are private property ; this is owing to the inhabitants having no check over the corporations. Even now, with what are styled reformed corporations, a proper check is sadly wanted.

I appeal to the citizens of Dublin ; their corporation is a highly respectable one, but, What check is there over their expenditure ? The want of a proper check is shewn in the very heavy local taxation : this remark may be applied to every corporation.

As one instance of reckless extravagance, I cite a case that occurred the other day, the appointment of a city marshal for Dublin. The former gentleman who held that office, Tom Reynolds, was a sort of laughing-stalk to the idle gazers at corporation shows. Tom, in addition to the office of city marshal, held that of inspector of pawn-brokers, in which I have heard he did his part well. His successor as city marshal has agreed to accept £300 a-year, Tom's salary having been £350. What are the duties of this well-salaried

officer? I read that the present officer appeared once in public officially, that he wore a scarlet tunic richly braided, and a cocked hat, *a la Francaise*, rode a decent-looking horse, and was admired by the crowd. Citizens of Dublin! is this raree-show value for £300 of your money? I admire the abilities of the artist, and regret that the owners of Ireland have so neglected his talent that he finds it necessary to play the Jack pudding before the mob of Dublin, and I more regret that there is no check over corporate extravagance; if there were, I am sure we would not see the people of Dublin paying £300 for such idle folly. There can be very little to do for the money, since Tom was able to inspect all the Dublin pawnbrokers, as well as ride his well-known gray charger as city marshal; but such things must be till there is a proper check over corporations. The old corporations beggared the towns, and the reformed body is so like the old one, that, like Pepper's ghost, one can hardly tell which is t'other.

CHAPTER XII.

ASSOCIATED PROPRIETARY.

"God has provided the ground for all."—PALEY's *Moral Phil.*, b. iii.

So limited are the views of some otherwise well-informed persons on the subject of landed property, that they find a difficulty of comprehending a condition of society in which land shall be held otherwise than as private property.

According to Archdeacon Paley's view, land was not private property in Britain anterior to the Roman invasion ; this he deduces from there being no mention of private property in land in Cæsar's account of Britain, and it is rendered more probable from the fact that, except the royal domains and those set apart for the chiefs—and these were official, not family properties—and other lands connected with offices, there was not private landed property in Ancient Ireland, nor, I believe, in Scotland.

In Ireland, anterior to the Anglo-Norman invasion, the lands belonged to the clan or tribe ; and as Scotland resembled Ireland in being divided into clans, I presume the same mode of land tenure also existed there.

One of the evils of the English invasion was the change from clan to feudal holding. At the same time I am not insensible to the defects of the clan system ; under it a nation could never be formed that could resist a formidable invasion from without ; but still the principle of the land system was good. Had the nation been made proprietor instead of the clans, the plan would have been complete ; still making the land the common property of each clan, instead of the private property of individuals, was based on the sound principle that the land should be the common property of all, as God has given it.

The defect is, that the whole island was not made one clan,—the sons of Erin.

Even under the brutal and bloody feudal system the original principle which made all lands the property of the Crown, as supreme enfeoffer or bestower, and which only granted them during the royal pleasure to private persons, as so many official feofs, had in it the grand idea that land is national, not personal property ; had the Crown upheld that national principle, we would not now be the prey to landlordism ; but the monarchs yielded before the armed hordes of feudalism, and hence feofs became allodial, or nearly allodial possessions, held almost as independent of any superior as Robinson Crusoe owned his desert island.

But these instances are from bye-gone times,

ancient ages. What is wanted are cases of land held otherwise than as private or individual property now. There are plenty of them.

The corporations have, in some cases, remnants of their properties.

Various societies possess property, as the Royal Dublin Society, the Royal Irish Academy, the Royal Hibernian Academy, the Museum of Irish Industry, the Clubs, the Banks, Hospitals. These are bodies of men, not individuals; some such bodies hold lands as well as chattels.

Trinity College owns above two hundred thousand acres of land, the estates being distributed over a great part of Ireland; the property possessed by this body of associated proprietors is very nearly equal to the entire of the Co. Louth; this county contains 200,484 acres, of which about 15,000 is waste, that is 1-13th of the whole. Of the College lands 63,258 acres are in the County Donegal alone; that was a fine sweep of land for this body of incorporated tutors to get! nearly ten miles square, or nearly one hundred square miles of land! and their entire landed property is above 312 square miles, independent of the very valuable property of Trinity College in Dublin, which is valued, for taxation, at £5,300, in addition to which the college has various benefices in its gift, and sends two members to Parliament. We may fairly value the land income of this body of incor-

porated tutors at £300,000 at the least : pretty well for thirty-three teachers, being above £9,000 a-year each. The entire Protestant church of Ireland is stated to cost about £600,000 a-year, this body of tutors have half of that big sum from land alone, to say nothing of their pay as teachers, which, as they enjoy the monopoly of putting the educational finish on our Protestant aristocracy and middle classes, must be a goodly sum ; judging by the results, these fellows cannot complain of not doing well these bad times.

In addition to these advantages the College is by law entitled to get a copy for nothing of every book published in the kingdom. I must give them a copy of this book, and this wealthy body will not pay me a farthing for my property. This appropriation being according to law is, of course, honest, otherwise it would be looting ; but English laws are sometimes apparently absurd and unnatural, as Paley quietly terms landlordism.

Under this law of copyright, five copies of every work published must be given gratuitously to bodies which, like Trinity College, ought to help literature instead of taxing it ; my work on the Irish Crosses having been published at five guineas a copy, the tax of five copies would be twenty-five guineas on me—twenty-five guineas' worth of my property for nothing ! it is not pleasant to find Jonathan Wild's freebooting notions embodied in

the copyright act, for the purpose of giving the goods of poor literary men to societies that are overflowing with wealth. If Trinity College wants books, they ought to be paid for: except by law they have no more right to take my book than they would have to take a pair of boots, a hat, or a coat, from the makers of these articles.

They teach moral philosophy, and are very urgent about religion in this Protestant University; they ought to illustrate their teaching by their practice, and not take other peoples' goods without payment.

But associated proprietors who hold far larger property in land than even the gigantic estate of Trinity College, is "The Irish Society," a body of men termed Irish, I suppose, because not one of them is Irish, or lives in Ireland. The fellows of Trinity College are absentees to their tenants in Donegal, but the Irish Society, being composed of "the twelve chief companies of the London Corporation," is, if possible, still more absentee. Two hundred and fifty years ago King James assigned the entire County of Londonderry to the Corporation of London. This body has lost part of its Irish property since, but still it is an extensive land owner in our country. M'Culloch states that almost all the County Londonderry is held by London companies (*Geographical Dictionary*).

The County Londonderry comprises 518,423 acres, being divided into

| | | |
|-----------------------|---------|--------|
| Cultivated land . . . | 338,817 | Acres. |
| Waste and bog . . . | 119,202 | |
| Water . . . | 10,040 | |

Being 810 square miles of our lands granted at one sweep to the London companies, who, in virtue of their possession, called the county Londonderry. This grant was ten times the size of the Trinity College estates ; What is its present rental ? The rents of our lands sent to London aldermen !

Railway companies are also associated proprietors.

The Established Church is a corporation of proprietors.

I might mention several other cases of similar proprietorship, but these are enough. I now proceed to explain the details of my own plan.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PERFECT CURE.

"What's to do?

A piece of work to make a sick man whole."

SHAKESPEARE, *Julius Caesar*.

IRELAND is sick of landlordism; mere quackery will not do; a plan that would only shift the complaint from one part of the social body to another, will not serve the purpose; the constitution of "the sick man" is sound. To restore to sound health, it is necessary that the destructive disease shall be expelled from the system. Our state physicians, speaking through Lord Stanley, declare they do not know what to do: I, who have the advantages of long experience and careful observation, may be excused for offering my plan for the salvation of my country.

Appoint persons, under an act of Parliament, by an elective system, similar to that by which poor-law guardians are now appointed, and according to the poor-law union divisions, thus forming a local acting body, whose business shall be to attend to the buying, letting, and management of land, as land agents do now.

These to be called land guardians.

Their territorial power to be the same as that of the poor-law guardians, that is, each set of land guardians to act for the same unions as the poor-law guardians do.

The land guardians to act on behalf of the people.

Land commissioners should be appointed by Government to serve as checks on the land guardians, just as the poor-law commissioners do with respect to the poor-law guardians. These would act on behalf of the Crown.

Thus the agency I recommend is exactly similar to that by which the poor-law system is now worked.

The duties of the land guardians would be—

To purchase land offered for sale, either in town or country.

To purchase lands, either in cultivation or lying now uncultivated, but which are susceptible of planting or being otherwise rendered useful.

To let such lands as farms, or otherwise to have them cultivated.

And to account for the expenditures and receipts to the land commissioners.

The purchase money to be advanced by the Bank of Ireland, for which advances the Government shall be security.

The lands purchased and the profits resulting from them to be Government property till the debt of the purchasing be paid.

No act of purchase, of letting, of payment, or other land agency on the part of the land guardians to be valid if not approved of by the land commissioners.

The debt being paid, and so the purchased lands being converted from private into national property, the rents or other profits from such lands are to be devoted to—

Paying poor-rates, county cess, and all other local taxes, so as to free both farmers and towns-people from local taxation.

To improving harbours and defraying all such expenses connected with them, as may render every port in Ireland free from all dues.

Shipping and the lives of seamen are at present lost to a fearful extent. The newspapers state that about fifty vessels a week are lost! Every possible means should be adopted to prevent these calamities. Asylum harbours, life-boats, steam-tugs, and whatever else can serve this great object ought to be amply provided. In stormy weather, during fogs, and other times of danger, steam-tugs are particularly needed. At present such vessels are kept by persons on speculation, and the prices asked for their services are so heavy, that captains sometimes risk the loss of the vessel and the lives of all on board, sooner than pay a very large sum for the tug. Tugs should, for cases of necessity, be at every dangerous coast, to render gratuitous service to vessels.

As the estates would be local, the application of the funds derived from them should, in the main, be local also, but a strict application of this plan would be injurious ; there must be national objects, for these every locality should contribute, such as the keeping up the lighthouses, should it be decided that they were to be kept out of the land fund ; the building of asylum harbours on the dangerous coast of the west and the south.

Other purposes will suggest themselves.

One might be freeing the country from income-tax, from the tea-tax, and other such charges, and paying all Ireland's taxation out of the land fund, except such taxes as are held to be promotive of morality, as those on intoxicating liquors, tobacco, &c.

The probable land fund would be forty or fifty millions a-year ; by the land fund I mean the profits from all sources, such as the land-lords derive their revenues from now, and also the large profits which would accrue from our waste lands when planted or otherwise made profitable ; and also all mines, fisheries, game, &c.

The land fund should be strictly national income, that is to say, *Irish income* ; Ireland to pay to England her fair share to the consolidated fund, either out of the land fund by taxes, or partly by both ; that share is now under seven millions a-year.

I make no suggestion as to the rules of tenancy ; when the land guardians shall be elected they can settle that point. I have no doubt that they would be well inclined to grant favourable terms to the tenants.

The advantages of this plan of having the land national property, to be managed by local land guardians, and these to be checked by land commissioners, are obvious. The questions of absenteeism, tenant right, &c., are solved. Ireland gets a revenue of forty or fifty millions for her own good purposes ; she can do justice to all, not only the farmers, but the heavily taxed people in towns ; she can furnish employment for all her population ; she can cover her fields with “ consummate cultivation”—to use Lord Dufferin’s phrase ;—she can cover her millions of acres of waste lands with crops for food or for wood, and she can place her people on a fair stage without any favoured absentees or other land monopolists to prevent her national prosperity.

I have spoken of the debt incurred by the purchasing of the lands as one which the Government should guarantee, but for which the land purchased and its profits might be responsible, and thus all I ask from Government is to endorse the bill ; say, in the case of farmed lands, a twenty years’ bill ; in the case of lands to be fenced, reclaimed, and planted, a bill of longer date.

Still, I think, the least our Government could do would be to pay half the amount out of the consolidated fund, and let the other half be a debt on the land.

Twenty millions were paid to purchase the freedom of the West-Indian blacks, we are spending several millions to rescue a few of the British people out of thraldom in Abyssinia; surely Britain should rescue Ireland from a state of land slavery and thraldom which is so discreditable to the statesmen of the United Kingdom, and which has been caused by her own bad land laws and the bad land-lords she has forced on us, and a state which renders us poor, disloyal, and dangerous. If we were all right, we should be the strength of the united islands, instead of being England's difficulty, danger, and disgrace.

Government, at the outset, might set men to work for the purpose of effecting a thorough drainage all over the country,—to drain the land, to drain many of the lakes, to regulate the outfall of the rivers; next to fence and plant the millions of acres of wild mountain and waste lands with proper timber. At once employment would be afforded to all our surplus workers.

Why not employ convict labour and military labour at these useful occupations?

In the County Wicklow the barracks are ready built; they are now idle; they are on the military

road formed by the soldiers at the beginning of this century, and which runs through the wild district I have described in chapter iv. Government should purchase and plant this fifty square miles of a desert, the work to be superintended by local land guardians ; half the debt to be paid by us, the other half out of the consolidated fund.

By England's bad land laws Ireland has lost at least one thousand millions of money within the last two centuries,—that's our bill. What part of that will she give to rescue us out of our present deplorable condition ?

If this plan were adopted, our farmers would be well fed, well clothed, well housed, well off ; our townspeople would not be weighed down with heavy rents and oppressive taxation ; our lands well tilled, our mountains adorned with useful timber, our naturally beautiful scenery vastly improved by the beauty of our woods. Enjoying our own dear island, this would be a happy nation ; no agrarian outrages, no arbitrary evictions ; we would have a glorious national income, we would have a country to be attached to ; no idlers, plenty of work for all, plenty of food for all, plenty of money for all good purposes,—such a people would be loyal, for they would enjoy their just right—IRELAND FOR THE IRISH.

But it may be asked, Would the land-lords sell? Aye, and be very glad to do so if they could get

anything like fair prices. They have sold about one-fifth of Ireland within the last few years in the Landed Estates Court. They have been compelled to sell their lands to railway companies. If the plan be approved and adopted by Parliament, plenty of land will be soon for sale.

In Lord Dufferin's letter to the *Times*, February 1st, 1867, his lordship says :—

"I do not deny the right of the State to deal in a peremptory manner with private property of all kinds, and especially with landed property; but, in assuming the right, it must be made clear that its exercise will be of indisputable benefit to the community at large, and the individual to whose prejudice it is enforced must be compensated to the full amount of the injury he sustains."

Adopting the views thus enunciated by his lordship, sensible that any plan attended with injustice or social convulsion cannot be good in the end, I have proposed a peaceable and an honest solution of our great national perplexity—one which could be introduced so gradually that no disruption of society would ensue, and one which would, I think, be gladly accepted by the majority of the land-lords themselves.

If I wished to advocate a forced sale of lands, I would not want legal examples. Railway companies have seized lands, houses, churches, churchyards; no property, public or private, is exempt from the railway power: this is because public interests are

superior to any private ones. As Jonathan Pim observes in his most excellent book, the "Condition and Prospects of Ireland":—"The soil of the country is the property of the State, granted to its possessors to use not to destroy. It is a trust for the benefit of all" (p. 247). That trust must be surrendered when the public good requires the sacrifice.

Non-residence was not contemplated when the lands of Ireland were granted to English persons. The conditions of James's grants included the erection of a fortified residence on each property; the design clearly was to create a strong Protestant garrison of gentry and yeomen, who should expel the Irish out of the country; but the result has been a weak Protestant body, and the greater part of the land-lords non-resident.

I have stood on an eminence in the County Galway, from which I could see the ruins of several castles, probably the former residences of the *Sassanagh* intruders who came over and took our lands centuries back, but there was not one respectable house to be seen—no person above the condition of an humble farmer lived for miles around; all the present land-lords are non-resident. During the time of the famine of 1847, in order to form a committee of four resident land-lords or clergy to distribute relief, one person had to come thirty miles, another eighteen, another fifteen, the fourth seven miles.

There are whole districts in Ireland of which the land-lords are non-resident.

Almost the entire of the County Londonderry is owned by London companies ; this land was one of James's grants, and in thus giving it to Londoners he violated his own rule of residence.

There are plenty of cases in which the British Government has compelled land-lords to give up the land. One I have met with in which not only had the land to be surrendered, but the amount of purchase money was fixed at fifteen years' rental : this occurred at Prince Edward's Island, British North America. At that place an anti-rent league was formed,—not by Irishmen, but by English and Scotch emigrants,—Government interfered, put down the league by soldiery, but it had a bill passed by which land-lords were obliged to relinquish rents altogether. The above facts are stated in the *Athenæum* for Dec. 28th, 1867.

So if the plan be agreed to, we are sure to get the land.

The proposed purchase by Government of our railways is an important fact ; these are said not to be so useful to the public as they might be, hence the idea of converting them from private into public property.

A nation, any more than an individual, should not live beyond its means ; if it does, if debts accumulate, the consequences are obvious,—a

millstone is hung round its neck—the interest of the money due cripples the resources of every one.

As the debt of England is above £20 for each person, man, woman, or child, it is easy for every one to reckon his own share of that responsibility; thus my family consists of six persons, so I am in debt nationally above £120, and my annual interest on my share is £4 or £5. This is fearful.

I suppose that Ireland, according to its population, owes, as its share of the national debt, £100,000,000. Is not this state of matters ruinous?

If Ireland belonged to its own people, if she had her own just land income of forty or fifty millions annually, she would soon not only be free of debt, free of all taxation, local or imperial, have free ports, have asylum harbours, have plenty of money to support her various societies that are now craving, like beggars, and are repelled as beggars, for aid from England,—aye, and are told they are beggars by the brutal aristocratic Press of England,—she would soon have more money than she could use.

Instead of poverty, discontent, and disloyalty, as we have now, we would be great, glorious and free, with every comfort reasonable people could desire, with plenty of money in the national treasury, and not owing a penny to anyone.

May heaven inspire our rulers with a proper

sense of justice to adopt the plan I have set forth. May God save Ireland from the evils of that system of landlordism under which our people have been groaning for ages, and which have made this noble island a byword among the nations of Europe.

In order to attain this “consummation devoutly to be wished,” we must use every just and proper exertion ; we must get, if possible, the assistance of the enlightened and liberal English reformers. We must form land clubs to free Ireland from landlordism. We will get, I am convinced, plenty of cordial, useful help from the other side of the Channel so soon as we are earnestly striving to help ourselves.

The carrying of the Emancipation Bill was a triumph for which Ireland can never be too grateful to the noble hero of peaceful, continuous, unflinching, successful agitation ; that act freed Ireland from religious tyranny by law, we have now to free the land from the tyranny of landlordism. Let not the example of the Great-Liberator be lost on us.

Rise, Erin, arise, from thy dark couch of sorrow,
Thy sky will yet brighten, thy grief fade away ;
The cloud which hangs o'er thee be gone by the morrow,
And this dark night give birth to a bright sunny day.

The cause of thy sorrow will not yield to wailing,
For ages thy groans have resounded in vain ;
Determined, united, unflinching, unfailing,
Thy sons will win for thee thy full rights again.

Then will Ireland be—

“ All that I wish thee,
Great, glorious, and free,
First flower of the land
And first gem of the sea.”

MOORE.

SUMMARY.

“ When I examine the state of European society with the unimpassioned spirit which a philosopher can alone command, I perceive that it is in a state of transition—a state of transition from feudal to federal principles.”—DISRAELI’s *Contarini Fleming*.

THE present Prime Minister of England published the above paragraph in 1831; events justified and still justify this opinion of a keen-sighted statesman, who is himself an illustration of his own conclusion. He has triumphantly overcome the hereditary claims of the English Feudal aristocracy to be at the head of the Government of Great Britain, and, so far, the new federal or popular principle has triumphed over the ancient one of feudal, aristocratic domination.

The purpose of my present work is to advocate the federal principle as applied to land, or, in other words, the conversion of the property of the Irish land-lords into national property.

The system of land ownership in this country before the Anglo-Norman invasion was federal. The principle was sound and just ; the defect of that ownership being that it was limited.

The country was owned in sections ; the owners were the clans. Had that federal plan been extended to all the island, had it embraced all the inhabitants in one federal, brotherly ownership, the people of this country would have escaped the horrors they have endured for many centuries.

To combine the whole of the people against an invading enemy was impossible under the clan system. Brien Boru, one of the most talented monarchs that ever lived, a monarch who was able to defeat the Danish power in this country at the very time it was completely triumphant in England, and had succeeded in placing a Danish monarch on the English Throne ; even the great, the victorious Brian Boru was unable to conquer the defects of a nation divided ("against itself") into a number of incoherent masses.

Unity is strength ; clanship and national unity were incompatible.

I have endeavoured to give a correct idea of the great natural capabilities of Ireland, and of the Irish people ; that this very fine country is in the hands of only a few thousand persons, who are masters of it with the amplest powers that laws can give ; that these owners have been forced on

us by England, who has also made the laws in their favour, and who protects them by its power.

That under the management, or mismanagement, of these land owners, Ireland is the worst cultivated country in the United Kingdom, and that one-fourth of it is lying waste, nearly the whole of the waste land being capable of profitable cultivation. I have shown that this defective and this neglected cultivation is the consequence of the monopoly of land-lords ; that the monopolists are a chief cause of the distress and disloyalty which prevail in Ireland, as well as of the emigration which is threatening to depopulate the island.

I have also noticed the shameful vituperation which the English Press has poured forth against the Irish nation. I have noticed its mendacious, continuous anti-Irish attacks, and how the English-made proprietors of Ireland, and the aristocratic press of England (I suppose Disraeli would call it the feudal press), agree in a hostile feeling to this country.

Next comes the natural question, By what right do these English-made monopolists of Ireland hold their properties ? I have proved from political philosophy and by plain common sense that their only right is English-made law, and that the original right to Ireland is in the people of Ireland, and that, as the rights of these monopolists are a public injury, they ought to be abrogated ; I have

- shewn the enormous cost land-lords are to us; explained the unsuitableness of feudalism for our present state of civilization, and that landlordism is a result of feudalism.

By a variety of examples I establish the rationality of federal owners, or, in other words, of associated proprietors; and, lastly, I explain the plan by which the entire of the Irish people could, in a peaceable and just way, be constituted joint owners of Ireland, and the great advantages that would result from this national proprietorship.

One most important subject is the great rents charged for building ground; this heavy payment for land monopoly presses with almost ruinous force on the persons who carry on business in cities. In Dublin, besides the very heavy rents which the inhabitants pay, and the heavy taxation which the Government puts on them, there are local rates of an extremely burdensome kind, amounting, it is said, to about one-fourth additional taxation on the estimated value.

How strange it is that while so much exertion has been made to relieve the land-tillers from the pressure of landlordism, nothing has been done in that respect for the dwellers in towns, who really feel the pressure far more severely.

The plan proposed by me would relieve both town and country from land-lord injustice; it is

broad, comprehensive, simple, and just ; it removes the curse of feudalism from the land.

It is the only plan that has been propounded for doing justice to all, by making all partakers in the advantages that would accrue from the land—that which God gave as the common property of all. God gave the land for the inhabitants thereof ; man's injustice has monopolized it. Land monopoly is doomed.

Ireland must become the property of the Irish !

“Circumstances are beyond the control of man, but his conduct is in his own power. The great event is as sure as that I am now penning this prophecy of its occurrence. With us it rests whether it shall be welcomed by wisdom, or by ignorance—whether its beneficial results shall be accelerated by enlightened minds, or retarded by our dark passions.”—Disraeli.

I close my work with this appropriate extract from *Contarini Fleming*.

THE END.

By the same Author.

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"Henry O'Neill's 'Ancient Crosses of Ireland' is a noble and a wondrous example of private zeal and untiring labor. His other recently published work on the 'Ancient Art of Ireland' is no less a credit to the same author."

The ATHENÆUM.

A very lengthened and favourable notice of the work appeared in the *Athenæum*, January 31st, 1863.

From the DAILY EXPRESS.

"Mr. O'Neill, in his preface, expresses a hope that this work may be considered a credit to the Irish Press. It certainly will be so considered by all persons of taste. The illustrations are exceedingly beautiful; the printing is admirable; the binding is elegant; and altogether, so far as the getting up of the work is concerned, it is a model of good taste and beautiful workmanship. The style of the Author is in keeping with the artistic execution of the framework which he has chosen for his thoughts. It is correct, clear, sensible, and genuine, with nothing tawdry or pretentious,—with no brilliancy but what shines naturally out of the gems which he has set with so much skill."

From the BUILDER.

"None but those who seem to be of opinion that out of Ireland 'cometh no good thing,' can doubt that in ancient times a high state of Art-cultivation there existed, whatever degree of general civilization may have accompanied it; and that eminence in Art could only co-exist with some considerable degree of general civilization, one cannot but admit, since the history of the whole world indicates as much; although high Art, in ancient times, has certainly also co-existed with much that was savage and otherwise, what we now decidedly call uncivilized. But so it is even now, and in England, too: a few hundred years hence, doubtless, it will be a general

opinion that, notwithstanding our eminence in the mechanical and other arts, we were a set of semi-savages. As for such art as that displayed in ancient Irish metalwork, of which, more especially, Mr. O'Neill gives colored and other illustrations, we are very much inclined to think with him that—

"If our modern workers in metal could show us as much Art power, and use it as skilfully, their works, even if based on commonon bronze, would be of many times more value than so much solid gold; but, now-a-days, the mere intrinsic value of the metal is generally the first consideration; 'Is it solid gold?' is the primary question: the artistic part is not heeded, simply because decorative art is not properly cultivated. Not so the Irish workers in meta: with them the artistic part was everything: the intrinsic value of the materials was not minded by these talented men."

that in Ireland, six hundred years ago, and for an indefinite period previously, there existed a peculiar order of civilization, which thereafter gradually sank and expired, there appears to be every reason to believe, notwithstanding the exertions of Dr. Petrie and others to disprove the existence of such a state of civilization.

"Of the Art displayed during this ancient period, Mr. O'Neill admits the defects, but upholds the real merits with all the enthusiasm of a true Irishman.

"We find," he says, "that in figure, the remains of Irish Art are defective; but in ornament, they show that in a knowledge of the sound principles of Art, in breadth of effect, united to richness of detail, in fertility of invention, and delicacy of execution, the Irish Artists were consummate masters, and have, perhaps, never been equalled by those of any other nation; that they excelled in color as well as in design: and that they, probably, colored their public buildings and monuments."

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"The author writes as an Irishman—proud of his country—desirous that its past glories should be known and appreciated, and that the present generation, learning from the past, should again take its proper place in the world of Art. . . . A more respectable cloud of witnesses than he brings forward to testify to the excellence and pre-eminence of the Irish Art of the early Christian period, cannot be well imagined. . . . In his drawings and lithographs we have beautiful and true copies of some of the most delicate and intricate designs. He, as an artist, has given the subject deep study. He thoroughly *understands* it; he has mastered its *principles*, and those principles he enunciates with great clearness. From the artistic knowledge he displays, and from the remarks which he makes on Art generally, and the laws which govern Art, one cannot help receiving his criticisms on Irish Art, laid down in chap. 8, as worthy the highest respect. He shows that his statements are founded on long and careful observation. . . . The chapter on the Round Towers shows great research and very careful observation. One is struck with the great amount of information gained by personal inspection and observation, which Mr. O'Neill displays. His remarks on "Dr. Petrie's mistakes" seem to be complete. We are greatly struck with the clever, witty, humorous, and masterly way in which he handles this difficult subject. . . . Mr. O'Neill has shewn that for ages Ireland has taken a high, if not the highest, place amongst civilized nations—he has shewn and proved from authorities, not Irish, that she not only excelled in Art (a first fruit of civilization), but that art in various countries is traceable to Irish teaching; that she assisted in spreading abroad that learning and civilization for which she was so famous at home. Truly does he assign the-

cause of her decline, and in a way not calculated to excite the anger of any party, does he manfully set forth these causes. . . . The style of Mr. O'Neill's writing is forcible and perspicuous—the matters discussed are treated in a manner which must prove interesting and instructive to all. No previous knowledge of the subject is required as preparation for its perusal. It is a work at once suited for the library of the student or for the drawing-room table."

From the RELIQUARY.

"Mr. O'Neill has, by the publication of his excellent volume now before us, done much towards enabling a correct estimate of the state of the arts of, and of the high state of civilization among the early Irish people to be formed, and he deserves the thanks of his brother archæologists for producing a volume so acceptable and useful as it is, and for the very lucid and masterly manner in which he has treated his subject throughout. . . . The third part of the work consists of an able dissertation on the Round Towers of Ireland, in which many of Dr. Petrie's statements are disproved, and his opinions satisfactorily refuted. We again commend Mr. O'Neill's volume to the notice of antiquaries, and trust to see other works from his able pen on kindred subjects."

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From the KILKENNY ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S JOURNAL.

"The Rev. James Graves called the attention of the members to the recent work issued by Mr. Henry O'Neill, 'On the Civilization and Fine Arts of Ancient Ireland.' It was a credit to the zeal, artistic skill, and untiring research of its author, and ought to be in the hands of every man who took pride in the olden glory of Ireland. Mr. O'Neill deserved well of his country, and, it was to be hoped, would find numerous purchasers for his work."

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